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THE PROVOST

AND

OTHER TALES

BY

JOHN GALT



NEW EDITION

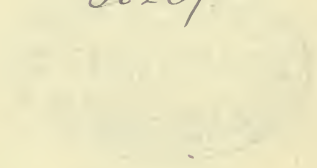
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THE PROVOST.

INTRODUCTION.



DURING a recent visit to the West Country, among other old friends we paid our respects to Mrs Pawkie, the relict of the Provost of that name, who three several times enjoyed the honour of being chief magistrate in Gudetown. Since the death of her worthy husband, and the comfortable settlement in life of her youngest daughter, Miss Jenny, who was married last year to Mr Caption, writer to the signet, she has been, as she told us herself, "beeking in the lown o' the conquest which the gudeman had, wi' sic an ettling o' pains and industry, gathered for his family."

Our conversation naturally diverged into various topics, and, among others, we discoursed at large on the manifold improvements which had taken place, both in town and country, since we had visited the Royal Burgh. This led the widow, in a complimentary way, to advert to the hand which, it is alleged, we have had in the editing of that most excellent work, entitled, "Annals of the Parish of Dalmailing," intimating, that she had a book in the handwriting of her deceased husband, the Provost, filled with a variety of most curious matter; in her opinion, of far more consequence to the world than any book that we had ever been concerned in putting out.

Considering the veneration in which Mr Pawkie had been through life regarded by his helpmate, we must confess that her eulogium on the merits of his work did not impress us with the most profound persuasion that it was really deserving of much attention. Politeness, however, obliged us to express an earnest desire to see the volume, which, after some little hesitation, was

produced. Judge, then, of the nature of our emotions, when, in cursorily turning over a few of the well-penned pages, we found that it far surpassed every thing the lady had said in its praise. Such, indeed was our surprise, that we could not refrain from openly and at once assuring her, that the delight and satisfaction which it was calculated to afford, rendered it a duty on her part to lose no time in submitting it to the public; and, after lavishing a panegyric on the singular and excellent qualities of the author, which was all most delicious to his widow, we concluded with a delicate insinuation of the pleasure we should enjoy, in being made the humble instrument of introducing to the knowledge of mankind a volume so replete and enriched with the fruits of his practical wisdom. Thus, partly by a judicious administration of flattery, and partly also by solicitation, backed by an indirect proposal to share the profits, we succeeded in persuading Mrs Pawkie to allow us to take the valuable manuscript to Edinburgh, in order to prepare it for publication.

Having obtained possession of the volume, we lost no time till we had made ourselves master of its contents. It appeared to consist of a series of detached notes, which, together, formed something analogous to an historical view of the different important and interesting scenes and affairs the Provost had been personally engaged in during his long magisterial life. We found, however, that the concatenation of the memoranda which he had made of public transactions, was in several places interrupted by the insertion of matter not in the least degree interesting to the nation at large; and that, in arranging the work for the press, it would be requisite and proper to omit many of the notes and much of the record, in order to preserve the historical coherency of the narrative. But in doing this, the text has been retained inviolate, in so much that while we congratulate the world on the addition we are thus enabled to make to the stock of public knowledge, we cannot but felicitate ourselves on the complete and consistent form into which we have so successfully reduced our precious materials; the separation of which, from the dross of personal and private anecdote, was a task of no small difficulty; such, indeed, as the editors only of the autographic memoirs of other great men can duly appreciate.

CHAPTER I.

THE FORECAST.

It must be allowed in the world, that a man who has thrice reached the highest station of life in his line, has a good right to set forth the particulars of the discretion and prudence by which he lifted himself so far above the ordinaries of his day and generation; indeed, the generality of mankind may claim this as a duty; for the conduct of public men, as it has been often wisely said, is a species of public property, and their rules and observances have in all ages been considered things of a national concernment. I have therefore well weighed the importance it may be of to posterity, to know by what means I have thrice been made an instrument to represent the supreme power and authority of Majesty in the royal burgh of Gudetown, and how I deported myself in that honour and dignity, so much to the satisfaction of my superiors in the state and commonwealth of the land, to say little of the great respect in which I was held by the townsfolk, and far less of the terror that I was to evil-doers. But not to be over circumstantial, I propose to confine this history of my life to the public portion thereof, on the which account I will take up the beginning at the crisis when I first entered into business, after having served more than a year above my time, with the late Mr Thomas Remnant, than whom there was not a more creditable man in the burgh; and he died in the possession of the functionaries and faculties of town-treasurer, much respected by all acquainted with his orderly and discreet qualities.

Mr Remnant was, in his younger years, when the growth of luxury and prosperity had not come to such a head as it has done since, a tailor that went out to the houses of the adjacent lairds and country gentry, whereby he got an inkling of the policy of the world, that could not have been gathered in any other way by a man of his station and degree of life. In process of time he came to be in a settled way, and when I was bound 'prentice to him, he had three regular journeymen and a cloth shop. It was therefore not so much for learning the tailoring, as to get an

insight in the conformity between the traffic of the shop and the board that I was bound to him, being destined by my parents for the profession appertaining to the former, and to conjoin thereto something of the mercery and haberdashery: my uncle, that had been a sutler in the army along with General Wolfe, who made a conquest of Quebec, having left me a legacy of three hundred pounds because I was called after him, the which legacy was a consideration for to set me up in due season in some genteel business.

Accordingly, as I have narrated, when I had passed a year over my 'prenticeship with Mr Remnant, I took up the corner shop at the Cross, facing the Tolbooth; and having had it adorned in a befitting manner, about a month before the summer fair thereafter, I opened it on that day, with an excellent assortment of goods, the best, both for taste and variety, that had ever been seen in the burgh of Gudetown; and the winter following, finding by my books that I was in a way to do so, I married my wife: she was daughter to Mrs Broderip, who kept the head inn in Irville, and by whose death, in the fall of the next year, we got a nest egg, that, without a vain pretension, I may say we have not failed to lay upon, and clock to some purpose.

Being thus settled in a shop and in life, I soon found that I had a part to perform in the public world; but I looked warily about me before casting my nets, and therefore I laid myself out rather to be entreated than to ask; for I had often heard Mr Remnant observe, that the nature of man could not abide to see a neighbour taking place and preferment of his own accord. I therefore assumed a coothy and obliging demeanour towards my customers and the community in general; and sometimes even with the very beggars I found a jocose saying as well received as a bawbee, although naturally I dinna think I was ever what could be called a funny man, but only just as ye would say a thought ajee in that way. Howsever, I soon became, both by habit and repute, a man of popularity in the town, in so much that it was a shrewd saying of old James Alpha, the bookseller, that "mair gude jokes were cracked ilka day in James Pawkie's shop, than in Thomas Curl, the barber's, on a Saturday night."



CHAPTER II.

A KITHING.

I COULD plainly discern that the prudent conduct which I had adopted towards the public was gradually growing into effect. Disputative neighbours made me their referee, and I became, as it were, an oracle that was better than the law, in so much that I settled their controversies without the expense that attends the same. But what convinced me more than any other thing that the line I pursued was verging towards a satisfactory result, was, that the elderly folk that came into the shop to talk over the news of the day, and to rehearse the diverse uncocs, both of a national and a domestic nature, used to call me bailie and my lord; the which jocular derision was as a symptom and foretaste within their spirits of what I was ordained to be. Thus was I encouraged, by little and little, together with a sharp remarking of the inclination and bent of men's minds, to entertain the hope and assurance of rising to the top of all the town, as this book maketh manifest, and the incidents thereof will certificate.

Nothing particular, however, came to pass, till my wife lay in of her second bairn, our daughter Sarah; at the christening of whom, among divers friends and relations, forbye the minister, we had my father's cousin, Mr Alexander Clues, that was then deacon convener, and a man of great potency in his way, and possessed of an influence in the town-council of which he was well worthy, being a person of good discernment, and well versed in matters appertaining to the guildry. Mr Clues, as we were mellowing over the toddy bowl, said, that by and by the council would be looking to me to fill up the first gap that might happen therein; and Dr Swapkirk, the then minister, who had officiated on the occasion, observed, that it was a thing that, in the course of nature, could not miss to be, for I had all the douce demeanour and sagacity which it behoved a magistrate to possess. But I cannily replied, though I was right contented to hear this, that I had no time for governing, and it would be more for the advantage of the commonwealth to look for the

counselling of an older head than mine, happen when a vacancy might in the town-council.

In this conjuncture of our discoursing, Mrs Pawkie, my wife, who was sitting by the fireside in her easy chair, with a cod at her head, for she had what was called a sore time o't, said :—

“ Na, na, gudeman, ye need na be sae mim ; every body kens, and I ken too, that ye're ettling at the magistracy. It's as plain as a pikestaff, gudeman, and I'll no let ye rest if ye dinna mak me a bailie's wife or a' be done”——

I was not ill pleased to hear Mrs Pawkie so spiritfui ; but I replied, “ Dinna try to stretch your arm, gudewife, further than your sleeve will let you ; we maun ca' canny mony a day yet before we think of dignities.”

The which speech, in a way of implication, made Deacon Clues to understand that I would not absolutely refuse an honour thrust upon me, while it maintained an outward show of humility and moderation.

There was, however, a gleg old carlin among the gossips then present, one Mrs Sprowl, the widow of a deceased magistrate, and she cried out aloud :—

“ Deacon Clues, Deacon Clues, I redd you no to believe a word that Mr Pawkie's saying, for that was the very way my friend that's no more laid himself out to be fleeced to tak what he was greenan for ; so get him intill the council when ye can : we a' ken he'll be a credit to the place,” and “ so here's to the health of Bailie Pawkie, that is to be,” cried Mrs Sprowl. All present pledged her in the toast, by which we had a wonderful share of diversion. Nothing, however, immediately rose out of this, but it set men's minds a-barming and working ; so that, before there was any vacancy in the council, I was considered in a manner as the natural successor to the first of the counsellors that might happen to depart this life.

CHAPTER III.

A DIRGIE.

IN the course of the summer following the baptism, of which I have rehearsed the particulars in the foregoing chapter, Bailie Mucklehose happened to die, and as he was a man long and well respected, he had a great funeral. All the rooms in his house were filled with the company ; and it so fell out that, in the confusion, there was neither minister nor elder to give the blessing sent into that wherein I was, by which, when Mr Shavings the wright, with his men, came in with the service of bread and wine as usual, there was a demur, and one after another of those present was asked to say grace ; but none of them being exercised in public prayer, all declined, when Mr Shavings said to me, " Mr Pawkie, I hope ye'll no refuse."

I had seen in the process, that not a few of the declinations were more out of the awkward shame of blateness, than any inherent modesty of nature, or diffidence of talent ; so, without making a phrase about the matter, I said the grace, and in such a manner that I could see it made an impression. Mr Shavings was at that time deacon of the wrights, and being well pleased with my conduct on this occasion, when he, the same night, met the craft, he spoke of it in a commendable manner ; and as I understood thereafter, it was thought by them that the council could not do better than make choice of me to the vacancy. In short, no to spin out the thread of my narration beyond necessity, let it here suffice to be known, that I was chosen into the council, partly by the strong handling of Deacon Shavings, and the instrumentality of other friends and well-wishers, and not a little by the moderation and prudence with which I had been secretly ettling at the honour.

Having thus reached to a seat in the council, I discerned that it behoved me to act with circumspection, in order to gain a discreet dominion over the same, and to rule without being felt, which is the great mystery of policy. With this intent, I, for some time, took no active part in the deliberations, but listened,

with the doors of my understanding set wide to the wall, and the windows of my foresight all open ; so that, in process of time, I became acquainted with the inner man of the counsellors, and could make a guess, no far short of the probability, as to what they would be at, when they were jooking and wising in a round-about manner to accomplish their own several wills and purposes. I soon thereby discovered, that although it was the custom to deduce reasons from out the interests of the community, for the divers means and measures that they wanted to bring to a bearing for their own particular behoof, yet this was not often very cleverly done, and the cloven foot of self-interest was now and then to be seen aneath the robe of public principle. I had, therefore, but a straightforward course to pursue, in order to overcome all their wiles and devices, the which was to make the interests of the community, in truth and sincerity, the end and object of my study, and never to step aside from it for any immediate speciality of profit to myself. Upon this, I have endeavoured to walk with a constancy of sobriety ; and although I have, to a certainty, reaped advantage both in my own person and that of my family, no man living can accuse me of having bent any single thing pertaining to the town and public, from the natural uprightness of its integrity, in order to serve my own private ends.

It was, however, some time before an occasion came to pass, wherein I could bring my knowledge and observations to operate in any effectual manner towards a reformation in the management of the burgh ; indeed, I saw that no good could be done until I had subdued the two great factions, into which it may be said the council was then divided ; the one party being strong for those of the king's government of ministers, and the other no less vehement on the side of their adversaries. I, therefore, without saying a syllable to any body anent the same, girded myself for the undertaking, and with an earnest spirit put my shoulder to the wheel, and never desisted in my endeavours, till I had got the cart up the brae, and the whole council reduced into a proper state of subjection to the will and pleasure of his majesty, whose deputies and agents I have ever considered all inferior magistrates to be, administering and

exercising, as they do, their power and authority in his royal name.

The ways and means, however, by which this was brought to pass, supply matter for another chapter; and after this, it is not my intent to say any thing more concerning my principles and opinions, but only to show forth the course and current of things proceeding out of the affairs, in which I was so called to perform a part requiring no small endeavour and diligence

CHAPTER IV.

THE GUILDRY.

WHEN, as is related in the foregoing chapter, I had nourished my knowledge of the council into maturity, I began to cast about for the means of exercising the same towards a satisfactory issue. But in this I found a great difficulty, arising from the policy and conduct of Mr Andrew M'Lucre, who had a sort of infestment, as may be said, of the office of dean of guild, having for many years been allowed to intromit and manage the same; by which, as was insinuated by his adversaries, no little grist came to his mill. For it had happened from a very ancient date, as far back, I have heard, as the time of Queen Anne, when the union of the kingdoms was brought to a bearing, that the dean of guild among us, for some reason or another, had the upper hand in the setting and granting of tacks of the town lands, in the doing of which it was jealoused that the predecessors of Mr M'Lucre, no to say an ill word of him, honest man, got their loofs creeshed with something that might be called a grassum, or rather, a gratis gift. It therefore seemed to me that there was a necessity for some reformation in the office, and I foresaw that the same would never be accomplished, unless I could get Mr M'Lucre wised out of it, and myself appointed his successor. But in this lay the obstacle; for every thing anent the office was, as it were, in his custody, and it was well known that he had an interest in keeping

by that which, in vulgar parlance, is called nine points of the law. However, both for the public good and a convenience to myself, I was resolved to get a finger in the dean of guild's fat pie, especially as I foresaw that, in the course of three or four years, some of the best tacks would run out, and it would be a great thing to the magistrate that might have the disposal of the new ones. Therefore, without seeming to have any foresight concerning the lands that were coming on to be out of lease, I set myself to constrain Mr M'Lucre to give up the guildry, as it were, of his own free-will; and what helped me well to this, was a rumour that came down from London, that there was to be a dissolution of the parliament.

The same day that this news reached the town, I was standing at my shop-door, between dinner and tea-time. It was a fine sunny summer afternoon. Standing under the blessed influence of the time by myself at my shop-door, who should I see passing along the crown of the causey, but Mr M'Lucre himself, and with a countenance knotted with care, little in unison with the sultry indolence of that sunny day.

"Whar awa sae fast, dean o' guild?" quo' I to him; and he stopped his wide stepping, for he was a long spare man, and looting in his gait.

"I'm just," said he, "taking a step to the provost's, to learn the particulars of thir great news—for, as we are to hae the casting vote in the next election, there's no saying the good it may bring to us all gin we manage it wi' discretion."

I reflected the while of a minute before I made any reply, and then I said—

"I would hae nae doubt of the matter, Mr M'Lucre, could it be brought about to get you chosen for the delegate; but I fear, as ye are only dean of guild this year, that's no to be accomplished; and really, without the like of you, our borough, in the contest, may be driven to the wall."

"Contest!" cried the dean of guild, with great eagerness; "wha told you that we are to be contested?"

Nobody had told me, nor at the moment was I sensible of the force of what I said; but, seeing the effect it had on Mr M'Lucre, I replied—

"It does not, perhaps, just now, do for me to be more particular, and I hope what I have said to you will gang no further; but it's a great pity that ye're no even a bailie this year, far less the provost, otherwise I would have great confidence."

"Then," said the dean of guild, "you have reason to believe that there is to be a dissolution, and that we are to be contested?"

"Mr M'Lucre, dinna speer any questions," was my answer, "but look at that and say nothing;" so I pulled out of my pocket a letter that had been franked to me by the earl. The letter was from James Portoport, his lordship's butler, who had been a waiter with Mrs Pawkie's mother, and he was inclosing to me a five-pound note to be given to an auld aunty that was in need. But the dean of guild knew nothing of our correspondence, nor was it required that he should. However, when he saw my lord's franking, he said, "Are the boroughs, then, really and truly to be contested?"

"Come into the shop, Mr M'Lucre," said I sedately; "come in, and hear what I have to say."

And he came in, and I shut and barred the half-door, in order that we might not be suddenly interrupted.

"You are a man of experience, Mr M'Lucre," said I, "and have a knowledge of the world, that a young man, like me, would be a fool to pretend to. But I have shown you enough to convince you that I would not be worthy of a trust, were I to answer any improper questions. Ye maun, therefore, gie me some small credit for a little discretion in this matter, while I put a question to yourself.—"Is there no a possibility of getting you made the provost at Michaelmas, or, at the very least, a bailie, to the end that ye might be chosen delegate, it being an unusual thing for any body under the degree of a bailie to be chosen thereto?"

"I have been so long in the guildry," was his thoughtful reply, "that I fear it canna be very well managed without me."

"Mr M'Lucre," said I, and I took him cordially by the hand, "a thought has just entered my head. Couldna we manage this matter between us? It's true I'm but a novice in public affairs, and with the mystery of the guildry quite unacquaint—if, however, you could be persuaded to allow yourself to be made

a bailie, I would, subject to your directions, undertake the office of dean of guild, and all this might be so concerted between us, that nobody would ken the nature of our paction—for, to be plain with you, it's no to be hoped that such a young counsellor as myself can reasonably expect to be raised, so soon as next Michaelmas, to the magistracy, and there is not another in the council that I would like to see chosen delegate at the election but yourself."

Mr M'Lucre swithered a little at this, fearing to part with the bird he had in hand; but, in the end, he said, that he thought what was proposed no out of the way, and that he would have no objection to be a bailie for the next year, on condition that I would, in the following, let him again be dean of guild, even though he should be called a Michaelmas mare, for it did not so well suit him to be a bailie as to be dean of guild, in which capacity he had been long used.

I guessed in this that he had a vista in view of the tacks and leases that were belyve to fall in, and I said—

"Nothing can be more reasonable, Mr M'Lucre; for the office of dean of guild must be a very fashious one, to folks like me, no skilled in its particularities; and I'm sure I'll be right glad and willing to give it up, when we hae got our present turn served.—But to keep a' things quiet between us, let us no appear till after the election overly thick; indeed, for a season, we maun fight, as it were, under different colours."

Thus was the seed sown of a great reformation in the burgh, the sprouting whereof I purpose to describe in due season.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST CONTESTED ELECTION.

THE sough of the dissolution of parliament, during the whole of the summer, grew stronger and stronger, and Mr M'Lucre and me were seemingly pulling at opposite ends of the rope.

There was nothing that he proposed in the council but what I set myself against with such bir and vigour, that sometimes he could scarcely keep his temper, even while he was laughing in his sleeve to see how the other members of the corporation were beglammered. At length Michaelmas drew near, when I, to show, as it were, that no ill blood had been bred on my part, notwithstanding our bickerings, proposed in the council that Mr M'Lucre should be the new bailie; and he on his part, to manifest, in return, that there was as little heart-burning on his, said "he would have no objections; but then he insisted that I should consent to be dean of guild in his stead."

"It's true," said he in the council on that occasion, "that Mr Pawkie is as yet but a greenhorn in the concerns of the burgh: however, he'll never learn younger, and if he'll agree to this, I'll gie him all the help and insight that my experience enables me to afford."

At the first, I pretended that really, as was the truth, I had no knowledge of what were the duties of dean of guild; but after some fleeching from the other councillors, I consented to have the office, as it were, forced upon me; so I was made dean of guild, and Mr M'Lucre the new bailie.

By and by, when the harvest in England was over, the parliament was dissolved, but no candidate started on my lord's interest, as was expected by Mr M'Lucre, and he began to fret and be dissatisfied that he had ever consented to allow himself to be hoodwinked out of the guildry. However, just three days before the election, and at the dead hour of the night, the sound of chariot wheels and of horsemen was heard in our streets; and this was Mr Galore, the great Indian nabob, that had bought the Beerland estates, and built the grand place that is called Lucknoo House, coming from London, with the influence of the crown on his side, to oppose the old member. He drove straight to Provost Picklan's house, having, as we afterwards found out, been in a secret correspondence with him through the medium of Mrs Picklan, who was conjunct in the business with Miss Nelly, the nabob's maiden sister. Mr M'Lucre was not a little confounded at this, for he had imagined that I was the agent on behalf of my lord, who was of the government side, so he wist

not what to do, in the morning when he came to me, till I said to him briskly—

“Ye ken, bailie, that ye’re trysted to me, and it’s our duty to support the nabob, who is both able and willing, as I have good reason to think, to requite our services in a very grateful manner.” This was a cordial to his spirit, and, without more ado, we both of us set to work to get the bailie made the delegate. In this I had nothing in view but the good of my country by pleasuring, as it was my duty, his majesty’s government, for I was satisfied with my situation as dean of guild. But the handling required no small slight of skill.

The first thing was, to persuade those that were on the side of the old member to elect Mr M’Lucre for delegate, he being, as we had concerted, openly declared for that interest, and the benefit to be gotten thereby having, by use and wont, been at an established and regular rate. The next thing was to get some of those that were with me on my lord’s side, kept out of the way on the day of choosing the delegate; for we were the strongest, and could easily have returned the provost, but I had no clear notion how it would advantage me to make the provost delegate, as was proposed. I therefore, on the morning of the business, invited three of the council to take their breakfast with me, for the ostensible purpose of going in a body to the council chamber to choose the provost delegate; but when we were at breakfast, John Snakers, my lad in the shop, by my suggestion, warily got a bale of broad cloth so tumbled, as it were by accident, at the door, that it could not be opened; for it bent the key in such a manner in the lock, and crooket the sneck, that without a smith there was no egress, and sorrow a smith was to be had. All were out and around the tolbooth waiting for the upshot of the choosing the delegate. Those that saw me in the mean time, would have thought I had gone demented. I ramped and I stamped; I bannet and I bellowed like desperation. My companions, no a bit better, flew fluttering to the windows, like wild birds to the wires of their cage. However, to make a long tale short, Bailie M’Lucre was, by means of this device, chosen delegate, seemingly against my side. But oh! he was a sleeper, for no sooner was he so chosen, than he began to act for his

own behoof; and that very afternoon, while both parties were holding their public dinner, he sent round the bell to tell that the potato crop on his back rig was to be sold by way of public roup the same day. There wasna one in the town that had reached the years of discretion, but kent what na sort of potatoes he was going to sell; and I was so disturbed by this open corruption, that I went to him, and expressed my great surprise. Hot words ensued between us; and I told him very plainly that I would have nothing further to say to him or his political profligacy. However, his potatoes were sold, and brought upwards of three guineas the peck, the nabob being the purchaser, who, to show his contentment with the bargain, made Mrs M'Lucre, and the bailie's three daughters, presents of new gowns and prin-ceds, that were not stuffed with wool.

In the end, as a natural consequence, Bailie M'Lucre, as delegate, voted for the Nabob, and ~~the~~ old member was thereby thrown out. But although the government candidate in this manner won the day, yet I was so displeased by the jookerie of the bailie, and the selfish manner by which he had himself reaped all the advantage of the election in the sale of his potatoes, that we had no correspondence on public affairs till long after; so that he never had the face to ask me to give up the guildry, till I resigned it of my own accord after the renewal of the tacks to which I have alluded, by the which renewals, a great increase was effected in the income of the town.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FAILURE OF BAILIE M'LCURE.



BAILIE M'LCURE, as I have already intimated, was naturally a greedy body, and not being content with the profits of his potatoe rig, soon after the election he set up as an o'er-sea merchant, buying beef and corn by agency in Ireland, and having the same sent to the Glasgow market. For some time, this traffic yielded him a surprising advantage; but the summer does

not endure the whole year round, nor was his prosperity ordained to be of a continuance. One mishap befell him after another; cargoes of his corn heated in the vessels, because he would not sell at a losing price, and so entirely perished; and merchants broke, that were in his debt large sums for his beef and provisions. In short, in the course of the third year from the time of the election, he was rookit of every plack he had in the world, and was obligated to take the benefit of the divor's bill, soon after which he went suddenly away from the town, on the pretence of going into Edinburgh, on some business of legality with his wife's brother, with whom he had entered into a plea concerning the moiety of a steading at the town-head. But he did not stop on any such concern there; on the contrary, he was off, and up to London in a trader from Leith, to try if he could get a post in the government by the aid of the nabob, our member; who, by all accounts, was hand and glove with the king's ministers. The upshot of this journey to London was very comical; and when the bailie afterwards came back, and him and me were again on terms of visitation, many a jocose night we spent over the story of the same; for the bailie was a kittle hand at a bowl of toddy; and his adventure was so droll, especially in the way he was wont to rehearse the particulars, that it cannot fail to be an edification to posterity, to read and hear how it happened, and all about it. I may therefore take leave to digress into the circumstantialia, by way of lightening for a time the seriousness of the sober and important matter, whereof it is my intent that this book shall be a register and record to future times.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRIBE.

MR M'LCURE, going to London, as I have intimated in the foregoing chapter, remained there, absent from us altogether

about the space of six weeks; and when he came home, he was plainly an altered man, being sometimes very jocose, and at other times looking about him as if he had been haunted by some ill thing. Moreover, Mrs Spell, that had the post-office from the decease of her husband, Deacon Spell, told among her kimmers, that surely the bailie had a great correspondence with the king and government, for that scarce a week passed without a letter from him to our member, or a letter from the member to him. This bred no small consideration among us; and I was somehow a thought uneasy thereat, not knowing what the bailie, now that he was out of the guildry, might be saying anent the use and wont that had been practised therein, and never more than in his own time. At length, the babe was born.

One evening, as I was sitting at home, after closing the shop for the night, and conversing concerning the augmentation of our worldly affairs with Mrs Pawkie and the bairns—it was a damp raw night; I mind it just as well as if it had been only yestreen—who should make his appearance at the room door but the bailie himself, and a blithe face he had?

“It’s a’ settled now,” cried he, as he entered with a triumphant voice; “the siller’s my ain, and I can keep it in spite of them; I don’t value them now a cutty-spoon; no, not a doit; no the worth of that; nor a’ their sponse about Newgate and the pillory;”—and he snapped his fingers with an aspect of great courage.

“Hooly, hooly, bailie,” said I; “what’s a’ this for?” and then he replied, taking his seat beside me at the fireside—“The plea with the custom-house folk at London is settled, or rather, there canna be a plea at a’, so firm and true is the laws of England on my side, and the liberty of the subject.”

All this was Greek and Hebrew to me; but it was plain that the bailie, in his jaunt, had been guilty of some notour thing, wherein the custom-house was concerned, and that he thought all the world was acquaint with the same. However, no to balk him in any communication he might be disposed to make to me, I said:—

“What ye say, bailie, is great news, and I wish you meikle
2.

joy, for I have had my fears about your situation for some time ; but now that the business is brought to such a happy end, I would like to hear all the true particulars of the case ; and that your tale and tidings sha'na lack slockening, I'll get in the toddy bowl and the gardevin ; and with that, I winket to the mistress to take the bairns to their bed, and bade Jenny Hachle, that was then our fee'd servant lass, to gar the kettle boil. Poor Jenny has long since fallen into a great decay of circumstances, for she was not overly snod and cleanly in her service ; and so, in time, wore out the endurance of all the houses and families that fee'd her, till nobody would take her ; by which she was in a manner cast on Mrs Pawkie's hands ; who, on account of her kindness towards the bairns in their childhood, has given her a howf among us. But, to go on with what I was rehearsing ; the toddy being ordered, and all things on the table, the bailie, when we were quiet by ourselves, began to say—

“Ye ken weel, Mr Pawkie, what I did at the 'lection for the member, and how angry ye were yoursel about it, and a' that. But ye were greatly mista'en in thinking that I got ony effectual fee at the time, over and above the honest price of my potatoes ; which ye were as free to bid for, had ye liket, as either o' the candidates. I'll no deny, however, that the nabob, before he left the town, made some small presents to my wife and dochter ; but that was no fault o' mine. Howsever, when a' was o'er, and I could discern that ye were mindet to keep the guildry, I thought, after the wreck o' my provision concern, I might throw mair bread on the water and not find it, than by a bit jaunt to London to see how my honourable friend, the nabob, was coming on in his place in parliament, as I saw none of his speeches in the newspaper.

“Well, ye see, Mr Pawkie, I gae'd up to London in a trader from Leith ; and by the use of a gude Scotch tongue, the whilk was the main substance o' a' the bairns' part o' gear that I inherited from my parents, I found out the nabob's dwelling, in the west end o' the town of London ; and finding out the nabob's dwelling, I went and rappit at the door, which a bardy flunkie opened, and speer't what I wantit, as if I was a thing no fit to be lifted off a midden with a pair of iron tongs. Like master,

like man, thought I to myself; and thereupon, taking heart no to be put out, I replied to the whipper-snapper—"I'm Bailie M'Lucre o' Gudetown, and maun hae a word wi' his honour."

"The cur lowered his birsses at this, and replied, in a mair ceeveleezed style of language, "Master is not at home." But I kent what not at home means in the morning at a gentleman's door in London; so I said, "Very weel, as I hae had a long walk, I'll e'en rest myself and wait till he come;" and with that, I plumpit down on one of the mahogany chairs in the trance. The lad, seeing that I was na to be jookit, upon this answered me, by saying, he would go and enquire if his master would be at home to me; and the short and the long o't was, that I got at last an audience o' my honourable friend.

"'Well, bailie,' said he, 'I'm glad to see you in London,' and a hantle o' ither courtly glammer that's no worth a repetition; and, from less to mair, we proceeded to sift into the matter and end of my coming to ask the help o' his hand to get me a post in the government. But I soon saw, that wi' a' the phraseology that lay at his tongue end during the election, about his power and will to serve us, his ain turn ser't, he cared little for me. Howsever, after tarrying some time, and going to him every day, at long and last he got me a tide-waiter's place at the custom-house; a poor hungry situation, no worth the grassum at a new tack of the warst land in the town's aught. But minnows are better than nae fish, and a tide-waiter's place was a step towards a better, if I could have waited. Luckily, however, for me, a flock of fleets and ships frae the East and West Indies came in a' thegither; and there was sic a stress for tide-waiters, that before I was sworn in and tested, I was sent down to a grand ship in the Malabar trade frae China, loaded with tea and other rich commodities; the captain whereof, a discreet man, took me down to the cabin, and gave me a dram of wine, and, when we were by oursels, he said to me—

"'Mr M'Lucre, what will you take to shut your eyes for an hour?'

"'I'll no take a hundred pounds,' was my answer.

"'I'll make it guineas,' quoth he.

"Surely, thought I, my eyne maun be worth pearls and

diamonds to the East India Company; so I answered and said—

“ ‘Captair, no to argol-bargol about the matter,’ (for a’ the time, I thought upon how I had not been sworn in;)—‘what will ye gie me, if I take away my eyne out of the vessel?’

“ ‘A thousand pounds,’ cried he.

“ ‘A bargain be’t,’ said I. I think, however, had I stood out I might hae got mair. But it does na rain thousands of pounds every day; so, to make a long tale short, I got a note of hand on the Bank of England for the sum, and, packing up my ends and my awls, left the ship.

“ It was my intent to have come immediately home to Scotland; but the same afternoon, I was summoned by the Board at the Custom-house for deserting my post; and the moment I went before them, they opened upon me like my lord’s pack of hounds, and said they would send me to Newgate. ‘Cry a’ at ance,’ quoth I; ‘but I’ll no gang.’ I then told them how I was na sworn, and under no obligation to serve or obey them mair than pleased mysel’; which set them a’ again a barking worse than before; whereupon, seeing no likelihood of an end to their stramash, I turned mysel’ round, and, taking the door on my back, left them, and the same night came off on the Fly to Edinburgh. Since syne they have been trying every grip and wile o’ the law to punish me as they threatened; but the laws of England are a great protection to the people against arbitrary power; and the letter that I have got to-day frae the nabob, tells me that the commissioners hae abandoned the plea.”

Such was the account and narration that the bailie gave to me of the particulars o’ his journey to London; and when he was done, I could not but make a moral reflection or two, on the policy of gentlemen putting themselves on the leet to be members of Parliament; it being a clear and plain thing, that as they are sent up to London for the benefit of the people by whom they are chosen, the people should always take care to get some of that benefit in hand paid down, otherwise they run a great risk of seeing their representatives neglecting their special interests, and treating them as entitled to no particular consideration.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHOOSING A MINISTER

THE next great handling that we had in the council after the general election, was anent the choice of a minister for the parish. The Rev. Dr Swapkirk having had an apoplexy, the magistrates were obligated to get Mr Pittle to be his helper. Whether it was that, by our being used to Mr Pittle, we had ceased to have a right respect for his parts and talents, or that in reality he was but a weak brother, I cannot in conscience take it on me to say; but the certainty is, that when the Doctor departed this life, there was hardly one of the hearers who thought Mr Pittle would ever be their placed minister, and it was as far at first from the unanimous mind of the magistrates, who are the patrons of the parish, as any thing could well be, for he was a man of no smeddum in discourse. In verity, as Mrs Pawkie, my wife, said, his sermons in the warm summer afternoons were just a perfect hushabaa, that no mortal could hearken to without sleeping. Moreover, he had a sorning way with him, that the genteeler sort could na abide, for he was for ever going from house to house about tea-time, to save his ain canister. As for the young ladies, they could na endure him at all, for he had aye the sough and sound of love in his mouth, and a round-about ceremonial of joking concerning the same, that was just a fasherie to them to hear. The commonality, however, were his greatest adversaries; for he was, notwithstanding the spareness of his abilities, a prideful creature, taking no interest in their hamely affairs, and seldom visiting the aged or the sick among them. Shortly, however, before the death of the doctor, Mr Pittle had been very attentive to my wife's full cousin, Miss Lizy Pinkie, I'll no say on account of the legacy of seven hundred pounds left her by an uncle that made his money in foreign parts, and died at Portsmouth of the liver complaint, when he was coming home to enjoy himself; and Mrs Pawkie told me, that as soon as Mr Pittle could get a

kirk, I needna be surprised if I heard o' a marriage between him and Miss Lizy.

Had I been a sordid and interested man, this news could never have given me the satisfaction it did, for Miss Lizy was very fond of my bairns, and it was thought that Peter would have been her heir; but so far from being concerned at what I heard, I rejoiced thereat, and resolved in secret thought, whenever a vacancy happened, Dr Swapkirk being then fast wearing away, to exert the best of my ability to get the kirk for Mr Pittle, not, however, unless he was previously married to Miss Lizy; for, to speak out, she was beginning to stand in need of a protector, and both me and Mrs Pawkie had our fears that she might outlive her income, and in her old age become a cess upon us. And it couldna be said that this was any groundless fear; for Miss Lizy, living a lonely maiden life by herself, with only a bit lassie to run her errands, and no being naturally of an active or eydent turn, aften wearied, and to keep up her spirits gaed may be, now and then, oftener to the gardevin than was just necessar, by which, as we thought, she had a taver look. Howsever, as Mr Pittle had taken a notion of her, and she pleased his fancy, it was far from our hand to misliken one that was sib to us; on the contrary, it was a duty laid on me by the ties of blood and relationship, to do all in my power to further their mutual affection into matrimonial fruition; and what I did towards that end, is the burden of this current chapter.

Dr Swapkirk, in whom the spark of life was long fading, closed his eyes, and it went utterly out, as to this world, on a Saturday night, between the hours of eleven and twelve. We had that afternoon got an inkling that he was drawing near to his end. At the latest, Mrs Pawkie herself went over to the manse, and stayed till she saw him die. "It was a pleasant end," she said, for he was a godly, patient man; and we were both sorely grieved, though it was a thing for which we had been long prepared; and indeed, to his family and connexions, except for the loss of the stipend, it was a very gentle dispensation, for he had been long a heavy handful, having been for years but, as it were, a breathing lump of mortality, groosy, and oozy, and

doozy, his faculties being shut up and locked in by a dumb palsy.

Having had this early intimation of the doctor's removal to a better world, on the Sabbath morning when I went to join the magistrates in the council-chamber, as the usage is, to go to the laft, with the town-officers carrying their halberts before us, according to the ancient custom of all royal burghs, my mind was in a degree prepared to speak to them anent the successor. Little, however, passed at that time, and it so happened that, by some wonder of inspiration, (there were, however, folk that said it was taken out of a book of sermons, by one Barrow an English divine,) Mr Pittle that forenoon preached a discourse that made an impression, in so much, that on our way back to the council-chamber I said to Provost Vintner, that then was—

“Really Mr Pittle seems, if he would exert himself, to have a nerve. I could not have thought it was in the power of his capacity to have given us such a sermon.”

The provost thought as I did, so I replied—

“We canna, I think, do better than keep him among us. It would, indeed, provost, no be doing justice to the young man to pass another over his head.”

I could see that the provost wasna quite sure of what I had been saying; for he replied, that it was a matter that needed consideration.

When we separated at the council-chamber, I threw myself in the way of Bailie Weezle, and walked home with him, our talk being on the subject of the vacancy; and I rehearsed to him what had passed between me and the provost, saying, that the provost had made no objection to prefer Mr Pittle, which was the truth.

Bailie Weezle was a man no overladen with worldly wisdom, and had been chosen into the council principally on account of being easily managed. In his business, he was originally by trade a baker in Glasgow, where he made a little money, and came to settle among us with his wife, who was a native of the town, and had her relations here. Being therefore an idle man, living on his money, and of a soft and quiet nature, he was for

the reason aforesaid chosen into the council, where he always voted on the provost's side; for in controverted questions every one is beholden to take a part, and he thought it was his duty to side with the chief magistrate.

Having convinced the bailie that Mr Pittle had already, as it were, a sort of infeoffment in the kirk, I called in the evening on my old predecessor in the guildry, Bailie M'Lucre, who was not a hand to be so easily dealt with; but I knew his inclinations, and therefore I resolved to go roundly to work with him. So I asked him out to take a walk, and I led him towards the town-moor, conversing loosely about one thing and another, and touching softly here and there on the vacancy.

When we were well on into the middle of the moor, I stopped, and, looking round me, said, "Bailie, surely it's a great neglect of the magistrates and council to let this braw broad piece of land, so near the town, lie in a state o' nature, and giving pasturage to only twa-three of the poor folk's cows. I wonder you, that's now a rich man, and with eyne worth pearls and diamonds, that ye dinna think of asking a tack of this land; ye might make a great thing o't."

The fish nibbled, and told me that he had for some time entertained a thought on the subject; but he was afraid that I would be overly extortionate.

"I wonder to hear you, bailie," said I; "I trust and hope no one will ever find me out of the way of justice; and to convince you that I can do a friendly turn, I'll no objec to gie you a' my influence free gratis, if ye'll gie Mr Pittle a lift into the kirk; for, to be plain with you, the worthy young man, who, as ye heard to-day, is no without an ability, has long been fond of Mrs Pawkie's cousin, Miss Lizy Pinkie; and I would fain do all that lies in my power to help on the match.

The bailie was well pleased with my frankness, and before returning home we came to a satisfactory understanding; so that the next thing I had to do, was to see Mr Pittle himself on the subject. Accordingly, in the gloaming, I went over to where he stayed: it was with Miss Jenny Killfuddy, an elderly maiden lady, whose father was the minister of Braehill, and the

same that is spoken of in the chronicle of Dalmailing, as having had his eye almost put out by a clash of glaur, at the stormy placing of Mr Balwhidder.

“Mr Pittle,” said I, as soon as I was in and the door closed. “I’m come to you as a friend; both Mrs Pawkie and me have long discerned that ye have had a look more than common towards our friend, Miss Lizy, and we think it our duty to enquire your intents, before matters gang to greater length.”

He looked a little dumfounded at this salutation, and was at a loss for an answer, so I continued—

“If your designs be honourable, and no doubt they are, now’s your time; strike while the iron’s hot. By the death of the doctor, the kirk’s vacant, the town-council have the patronage; and, if ye marry Miss Lizy, my interest and influence shall not be slack in helping you into the poopit.” In short, out of what passed that night, on the Monday following Mr Pittle and Miss Lizy were married; and by my dexterity, together with the able help I had in Bailie M’Lucre, he was in due season placed and settled in the parish; and the next year more than fifty acres of the town-moor were inclosed, on a nine hundred and ninety-nine years’ tack, at an easy rate between me and the bailie, he paying the half of the expense of the ditching and rooting out of the whins; and it was acknowledged by every one that saw it, that there had not been a greater improvement for many years in all the country side. But to the best actions there will be adverse and discontented spirits; and, on this occasion, there were not wanting persons naturally of a disloyal opposition temper, who complained of the inclosure as a usurpation of the rights and property of the poorer burghers. Such revilings, however, are what all persons in authority must suffer; and they had only the effect of making me button my coat, and look out the crooser to the blast.



CHAPTER IX.

AN EXECUTION.

THE attainment of honours and dignities is not enjoyed without a portion of trouble and care, which, like a shadow, follows all temporalities. On the very evening of the same day that I was first chosen to be a bailie, a sore affair came to light, in the discovery that Jean Gaisling had murdered her bastard bairn. She was the daughter of a donsie mother that could gie no name to her gets, of which she had two laddies, besides Jean. The one of them had gone off with the soldiers some time before; the other, a douce well-behaved callan, was in my lord's servitude, as a stable-boy at the castle. Jeanie herself was the bonniest lassie in the whole town, but light-headed, and fonder of outgait and blether in the causey than was discreet of one of her uncertain parentage. She was, at the time when she met with her misfortune, in the service of Mrs Dalrymple, a colonel's widow, that came out of the army and settled among us on her jointure.

This Mrs Dalrymple, having been long used to the loose morals of camps and regiments, did not keep that strict hand over poor Jeanie, and her other serving lass, that she ought to have done, and so the poor guideless creature fell into the snare of some of the ne'er-do-weel gentlemen that used to play cards at night with Mrs Dalrymple. The truths of the story were never well known, nor who was the father, for the tragical issue barred all enquiry; but it came out that poor Jeanie was left to herself, and, being instigated by the Enemy, after she had been delivered, did, while the midwife's back was turned, strangle the baby with a napkin. She was discovered in the very fact, with the bairn black in the face in the bed beside her.

The heinousness of the crime can by no possibility be lessened; but the beauty of the mother, her tender years, and her light-headedness, had won many favourers; and there was a great leaning in the hearts of all the town to compassionate her, especially when they thought of the ill example that had been set to

her in the walk and conversation of her mother. It was not, however, within the power of the magistrates to overlook the accusation; so we were obligated to cause a precognition to be taken, and the search left no doubt of the wilfulness of the murder. Jeanie was in consequence removed to the tolbooth, where she lay till the lords were coming to Ayr, when she was sent thither to stand her trial before them; but, from the hour she did the deed, she never spoke.

Her trial was a short procedure, and she was cast to be hanged—and not only to be hanged, but ordered to be executed in our town, and her body given to the doctors to make an atomy. The execution of Jeanie was what all expected would happen; but when the news reached the town of the other parts of the sentence, the wail was as the sough of a pestilence, and fain would the council have got it dispensed with. But the Lord Advocate was just wud at the crime, both because there had been no previous concealment, so as to have been an extenuation for the shame of the birth, and because Jeanie would neither divulge the name of the father, nor make answer to all the interrogatories that were put to her—standing at the bar like a dumble, and looking round her, and at the judges, like a demented creature, and beautiful as a Flanders' baby. It was thought by many, that her advocate might have made great use of her visible consternation, and pled that she was by herself; for in truth she had every appearance of being so. He was, however, a dure man, no doubt well enough versed in the particulars and punctualities of the law for an ordinary plea; but no of the right sort of knowledge and talent to take up the case of a forlorn lassie, misled by ill example and a winsome nature, and clothed in the allurements of loveliness, as the judge himself said to the jury.

On the night before the day of execution, she was brought over in a chaise from Ayr between two town-officers, and placed again in our hands, and still she never spoke.

Nothing could exceed the compassion that every one had for poor Jeanie, so she wasna committed to a common cell, but laid in the council-room, where the ladies of the town made up a comfortable bed for her, and some of them sat up all night

and prayed for her; but her thoughts were gone, and she sat silent.

In the morning, by break of day, her wanton mother, that had been trolloping in Glasgow, came to the tolbooth door, and made a dreadful wally-waeing, and the ladies were obligated, for the sake of peace, to bid her be let in. But Jeanie noticed her not, still sitting with her eyes cast down, waiting the coming on of the hour of her doom. The wicked mother first tried to rouse her by weeping and distraction, and then she took to upbraiding; but Jeanie seemed to heed her not, save only once, and then she but looked at the misleart tinkler, and shook her head. I happened to come into the room at this time, and seeing all the charitable ladies weeping around, and the randy mother talking to the poor lassie as loudly and vehement as if she had been both deaf and sullen, I commanded the officers, with a voice of authority, to remove the mother, by which we had for a season peace, till the hour came.

There had not been an execution in the town in the memory of the oldest person then living; the last that suffered was one of the martyrs in the time of the persecution, so that we were not skilled in the business, and had besides no hangman, but were necessitated to borrow the Ayr one. Indeed, I being the youngest bailie, was in terror that the obligation might have fallen on me.

A scaffold was erected at the Tron, just under the tolbooth windows, by Thomas Gimblet, the master-of-work, who had a good penny of profit by the job, for he contracted with the town-council, and had the boards after the business was done to the bargain; but Thomas was then deacon of the wrights, and himself a member of our body.

At the hour appointed, Jeanie, dressed in white, was led out by the town-officers, and in the midst of the magistrates from among the ladies, with her hands tied behind her with a black riband. At the first sight of her at the tolbooth stairhead, a universal sob rose from all the multitude, and the sternest e'e couldna refrain from shedding a tear. We marched slowly down the stair, and on to the foot of the scaffold, where her younger brother, Willy, that was stable-boy at my lord's, was

standing by himself, in an open ring made round him in the crowd; every one compassionating the dejected laddie, for he was a fine youth, and of an orderly spirit.

As his sister came towards the foot of the ladder, he ran towards her, and embraced her with a wail of sorrow that melted every heart, and made us all stop in the middle of our solemnity. Jeanie looked at him, (for her hands were tied,) and a silent tear was seen to drop from her cheek. But in the course of little more than a minute, all was quiet, and we proceeded to ascend the scaffold. Willy, who had by this time dried his eyes, went up with us, and when Mr Pittle had said the prayer, and sung the psalm, in which the whole multitude joined, as it were with the contrition of sorrow, the hangman stepped forward to put on the fatal cap, but Willy took it out of his hand, and placed it on his sister himself, and then kneeling down, with his back towards her, closing his eyes and shutting his ears with his hands, he saw not nor heard when she was launched into eternity.

When the awful act was over, and the stir was for the magistrates to return, and the body to be cut down, poor Willy rose, and, without looking round, went down the steps of the scaffold; the multitude made a lane for him to pass, and he went on through them hiding his face, and gaed straight out of the town. As for the mother, we were obligated, in the course of the same year, to drum her out of the town, for stealing thirteen choppin bottles from William Gallon's, the vintner's, and selling them for whisky to Maggy Picken, that was tried at the same time for the reset.

CHAPTER X.

A RIOT.

Nothing very material, after Jeanie Gaisling's affair, happened in the town till the time of my first provostry, when an event arose with an aspect of exceeding danger to the lives and pro-

perties of the whole town. I cannot indeed think of it at this day, though age has cooled me down in all concerns to a spirit of composure, without feeling the blood boil in my veins; so greatly, in the matter alluded to, was the king's dignity and the rightful government, by law and magistracy, insulted in my person.

From time out of mind, it had been an ancient and commendable custom in the burgh, to have, on the king's birth-day, a large bowl of punch made in the council-chamber, in order and to the end and effect of drinking his majesty's health at the cross; and for pleasance to the commonality, the magistrates were wont, on the same occasion, to allow a cart of coals for a bonfire. I do not now, at this distance of time, remember the cause how it came to pass, but come to pass it did, that the council resolved for time coming to refrain from giving the coals for the bonfire; and it so fell out that the first administration of this economy was carried into effect during my provostry, and the wyte of it was laid at my door by the trades' lads, and others, that took on them the lead in hobleshows at the fairs, and such like public doings. Now I come to the issue and particulars.

The birth-day, in progress of time, came round, and the morning was ushered in with the ringing of bells, and the windows of the houses adorned with green boughs and garlands. It was a fine bright day, and nothing could exceed the glee and joviality of all faces till the afternoon, when I went up to the council-chamber in the to booth, to meet the other magistrates and respectable characters of the town, in order to drink the king's health. In going thither, I was joined, just as I was stepping out of my shop, by Mr Stoup, the excise gauger, and Mr Firiot, the meal-monger, who had made a power of money a short time before, by a cargo of corn that he had brought from Belfast, the ports being then open, for which he was envied by some, and by the common sort was considered and reviled as a wicked hard-hearted forestaller. As for Mr Stoup, although he was a very creditable man, he had the repute of being overly austere in his vocation, for which he was not liked, over and above the dislike that the commonality cherish against all of his

calling ; so that it was not possible that any magistrate, such as I endeavoured to be, adverse to ill-doers, and to vice and immorality of every kind, could have met at such a time and juncture, a greater misfortune than those two men, especially when it is considered, that the abolition of the bonfire was regarded as a heinous trespass on the liberties and privileges of the people. However, having left the shop, and being joined, as I have narrated, by Mr Stoup and Mr Firiot, we walked together at a sedate pace towards the tolbooth, before which, and at the cross, a great assemblage of people were convened ; trades' lads, weavers with coats out at the elbow, the callans of the school ; in short, the utmost gathering and congregation of the clan-jamphry, who, the moment they saw me coming, set up a great shout and howl, crying like desperation, "Provost, whar's the bonfire? Hae ye sent the coals, provost, hame to yoursel, or selt them, provost, for meal to the forestaller?" with other such misleart phraseology that was most contemptuous, bearing every symptom of the rebellion and insurrection that they were then meditating. But I kept my temper, and went into the council-chamber, where others of the respectable inhabitants were met with the magistrates and town-council assembled.

"What's the matter, provost?" said several of them as I came in ; "are ye ill ; or what has fashed you?" But I only replied, that the mob without was very unruly for being deprived of their bonfire. Upon this, some of those present proposed to gratify them, by ordering a cart of coals, as usual ; but I set my face against this, saying, that it would look like intimidation were we now to comply, and that all veneration for law and authority would be at an end by such weakness on the part of those entrusted with the exercise of power. There the debate, for a season, ended ; and the punch being ready, the table was taken out of the council-chamber and carried to the cross, and placed there, and then the bowl and glasses—the magistrates following, and the rest of the company.

Seeing us surrounded by the town-officers with their halberts, the multitude made way, seemingly with their wonted civility, and, when his majesty's health was drank, they shouted with us, seemingly, too, as loyally as ever ; but that was a traitorous

device to throw us off our guard, as, in the upshot, was manifested ; for no sooner had we filled the glasses again, than some of the most audacious of the rioters began to insult us, crying, " The bonfire! the bonfire!—No fire, no bowl!—Gentle and simple should share and share alike." In short, there was a moving backwards and forwards, and a confusion among the mob, with snatches of huzzas and laughter, that boded great mischief; and some of my friends near me said to me no to be alarmed, which only alarmed me the more, as I thought they surely had heard something. However, we drank our second glass without any actual molestation; but when we gave the three cheers, as the custom was, after the same, instead of being answered joyfully, the mob set up a frightful yell, and, rolling like the waves of the sea, came on us with such a shock, that the table, and punch-bowl, and glasses, were coupé and broken. Bailie Weezle, who was standing on the opposite side, got his shins so ruffled by the falling of the table, that he was for many a day after confined to the house with two sore legs; and it was feared he would have been a lameter for life.

The dinging down of the table was the signal of the rebellious ringleaders for open war. Immediately there was an outcry and a roaring, that was a terrification to hear; and I know not how it was, but before we kent where we were, I found myself, with many of those who had been drinking the king's health, once more in the council-chamber, where it was proposed that we should read the riot act from the windows; and this awful duty, by the nature of my office as provost, it behoved me to perform. Nor did I shrink from it; for by this time my corruption was raised, and I was determined not to let the royal authority be set at nought in my hands.

Accordingly, Mr Keelivine, the town-clerk, having searched out among his law books for the riot act, one of the windows of the council-chamber was opened, and the bellman having, with a loud voice, proclaimed the " O yes!" three times, I stepped forward with the book in my hands. At the sight of me, the rioters, in the most audacious manner, set up a blasphemous laugh; but, instead of finding me daunted thereat, they were surprised at my fortitude; and, when I began to read, they

listened in silence. But this was a concerted stratagem; for the moment that I had ended, a dead cat came whizzing through the air like a comet, and gave me such a clash in the face that I was knocked down to the floor, in the middle of the very council-chamber. What ensued is neither to be told nor described; some were for beating the fire-drum; others were for arming ourselves with what weapons were in the tolbooth; but I deemed it more congenial to the nature of the catastrophe, to send off an express to Ayr for the regiment of soldiers that was quartered there—the roar of the rioters without, being all the time like a raging flood.

Major Target, however, who had seen service in foreign wars, was among us, and he having tried in vain to get us to listen to him, went out of his own accord to the rioters, and was received by them with three cheers. He then spoke to them in an exhorting manner, and represented to them the imprudence of their behaviour; upon which they gave him three other cheers, and immediately dispersed and went home. The major was a vain body, and took great credit to himself, as I heard, for this; but, considering the temper of mind the mob was at one time in, it is quite evident that it was no so much the major's speech and exhortation that sent them off, as their dread and terror of the soldiers that I had sent for.

All that night the magistrates, with other gentlemen of the town, sat in the council-chamber, and sent out, from time to time, to see that every thing was quiet; and by this judicious proceeding, of which we drew up and transmitted a full account to the king and government in London, by whom the whole of our conduct was highly applauded, peace was maintained till the next day at noon, when a detachment, as it was called, of four companies came from the regiment in Ayr, and took upon them the preservation of order and regularity. I may here notice, that this was the first time any soldiers had been quartered in the town since the forty-five; and a woeful warning it was of the consequences that follow rebellion and treasonable practices; for, to the present day, we have always had a portion of every regiment, sent to Ayr, quartered upon us.

CHAPTER XI.

POLICY.

ABOUT the end of my first provostry, I began to make a discovery. Whether it was that I was a little inordinately lifted up by reason of the dignity, and did not comport myself with a sufficient condescension and conciliation of manner to the rest of the town-council, it would be hard to say. I could, however, discern that a general ceremonious insincerity was performed by the members towards me, especially on the part of those who were in league and conjunct with the town-clerk, who comported himself, by reason of his knowledge of the law, as if he was in verity the true and effectual chief magistrate of the burgh; and the effect of this discovery, was a consideration and digesting within me how I should demean myself, so as to regain the vantage I had lost; taking little heed as to how the loss had come, whether from an ill-judged pride and pretending in myself, or from the natural spirit of envy, that darkens the good-will of all mankind towards those who get sudden promotion, as it was commonly thought I had obtained, in being so soon exalted to the provostry.

Before the Michaelmas I was, in consequence of this deliberation and counselling with my own mind, fully prepared to achieve a great stroke of policy for the future government of the town. I saw that it would not do for me for a time to stand overly eminent forward, and that it was a better thing, in the world, to have power and influence, than to show the possession of either. Accordingly, after casting about from one thing to another, I bethought with myself, that it would be a great advantage if the council could be worked with, so as to nominate and appoint My Lord the next provost after me. In the proposing of this, I could see there would be no difficulty; but the hazard was, that his lordship might only be made a tool of instrumentality to our shrewd and sly town-clerk, Mr Keelivine, while it was of great importance that I should keep the management of my lord in my own hands. In this strait, however, a thing

came to pass, which strongly confirms me in the opinion, that good-luck has really a great deal to say with the prosperity of men. The earl, who had not for years been in the country, came down in the summer from London, and I, together with the other magistrates and council, received an invitation to dine with him at the castle. We all of course went, "with our best breeding," as the old proverb says, "helped by our brawest cleeding;" but I soon saw that it was only a *pro forma* dinner, and that there was nothing of cordiality in all the civility with which we were treated, both by my lord and my lady. Nor, indeed, could I, on an after-thought, blame our noble entertainers for being so on their guard; for in truth some of the deacons, (I'll no say any of the bailies,) were so transported out of themselves with the glory of my lord's banquet, and the thought of dining at the castle, and at the first table too, that when the wine began to fiz in their noddles, they forgot themselves entirely, and made no more of the earl than if he had been one of themselves. Seeing to what issue the matter was tending, I set a guard upon myself; and while my lord, out of a parly-voo politess, was egging them on, one after another, to drink deeper and deeper of his old wines, to the manifest detriment of their own senses, I kept myself in a degree as sober as a judge, warily noting all things that came to pass.

The earl had really a commendable share of common sense for a lord, and the discretion of my conduct was not unnoticed by him; in so much, that after the major part of the council had become, as it may be said, out o' the body, cracking their jokes with one another, just as if all present had been carousing at the Cross-Keys, his lordship wised to me to come and sit beside him, where we had a very private and satisfactory conversation together; in the which conversation, I said, that it was a pity he would not allow himself to be nominated our provost. Nobody had ever minted to him a thought of the thing before; so it was no wonder that his lordship replied, with a look of surprise, saying, "That so far from refusing, he had never heard of any such proposal."

"That is very extraordinary, my lord," said I; "for surely it is for your interests, and would to a certainty be a great advan-

tage to the town, were your lordship to take upon you the nominal office of provost; I say nominal, my lord, because being now used to the duties, and somewhat experienced therein, I could take all the necessary part of the trouble off your lordship's hands, and so render the provostry in your lordship's name a perfect nonentity." Whereupon, he was pleased to say, if I would do so, and he commended my talents and prudence, he would have no objection to be made the provost at the ensuing election. Something more explicit might have ensued at that time; but Bailie M'Lucre and Mr Sharpset, who was the dean of guild, had been for about the space of half an hour carrying on a vehement argument anent some concern of the guildry, in which, coming to high words, and both being beguiled and ripened into folly by the earl's wine, they came into such a manifest quarrel, that Mr Sharpset pulled off the bailie's best wig, and flung it with a damn into the fire: the which stramash caused my lord to end the sederunt; but none of the magistrates, save myself, was in a condition to go with his lordship to My Lady in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SPY.

SHORTLY after the foregoing transaction, a thing happened that, in a manner, I would fain conceal and suppress from the knowledge of future times, although it was but a sort of sprose to make the world laugh. Fortunately for my character, however, it did not fall out exactly in my hands, although it happened in the course of my provostry. The matter spoken of, was the affair of a Frenchman who was taken up as a spy; for the American war was then raging, and the French had taken the part of the Yankee rebels.

One day, in the month of August it was, I had gone on some private concernment of my own to Kilmarnock, and Mr Booble,

who was then oldest bailie, naturally officiated as chief magistrate in my stead.

There have been, as the world knows, a disposition on the part of the grand monarque of that time, to invade and conquer this country, the which made it a duty incumbent on all magistrates to keep a vigilant eye on the in-comings and out-goings of aliens and other suspectable persons. On the said day, and during my absence, a Frenchman, that could speak no manner of English, somehow was discovered in the Cross-Key inns. What he was, or where he came from, nobody at the time could tell, as I was informed; but there he was, having come into the house at the door, with a bundle in his hand, and a portmanty on his shoulder, like a traveller out of some vehicle of conveyance. Mrs Drammer, the landlady, did not like his looks; for he had toozy black whiskers, was lank and wan, and moreover deformed beyond human nature, as she said, with a parrot nose, and had no cravat, but only a bit black riband drawn through two button-holes, fastening his ill-coloured sark neck, which gave him altogether something of an unwholesome, outlandish appearance.

Finding he was a foreigner, and understanding that strict injunctions were laid on the magistrates by the king and government anent the egressing of such persons, she thought, for the credit of her house, and the safety of the community at large, that it behoved her to send word to me, then provost, of this man's visibility among us; but as I was not at home, Mrs Pawkie, my wife, directed the messenger to Bailie Booble's. The bailie was, at all times, overly ready to claught at an alarm; and when he heard the news, he went straight to the council-room, and sending for the rest of the council, ordered the alien enemy, as he called the forlorn Frenchman, to be brought before him. By this time, the suspicion of a spy in the town had spread far and wide; and Mrs Pawkie told me, that there was a palid consternation in every countenance when the black and yellow man—for he had not the looks of the honest folks of this country—was brought up the street between two of the town-officers, to stand an examine before Bailie Booble.

Neither the bailie, nor those that were then sitting with him,

could speak any French language, and "the alien enemy" was as little master of our tongue. I have often wondered how the bailie did not jealousy that he could be no spy, seeing how, in that respect, he wanted the main faculty. But he was under the enchantment of a panic, partly thinking also, perhaps, that he was to do a great exploit for the government in my absence.

However, the man was brought before him, and there was he, and them all, speaking loud out to one another as if they had been hard of hearing, when I, on my coming home from Kilmarnock, went to see what was going on in the council. Considering that the procedure had been in hand some time before my arrival, I thought it judicious to leave the whole business with those present, and to sit still as a spectator; and really it was very comical to observe how the bailie was driven to his wit's-end by the poor lean and yellow Frenchman, and in what a pucker of passion the pannel put himself at every new interlocutor, none of which he could understand. At last, the bailie getting no satisfaction—how could he?—he directed the man's portmanty and bundle to be opened; and in the bottom of the forementioned package, there, to be sure, was found many a mystical and suspicious paper, which no one could read; among others, there was a strange map, as it then seemed to all present.

"I gude faith," cried the bailie, with a keekle of exultation, "here's proof enough now. This is a plain map o' the Frith o' Clyde, all the way to the tail of the bank o' Greenock. This muckle place is Arran; that round ane is the craig of Ailsa; the wee ane between is Plada. Gentlemen, gentlemen, this is a sore discovery; there will be hanging and quartering on this." So he ordered the man to be forthwith committed as a king's prisoner to the tolbooth; and turning to me, said:—"My lord provost, as ye have not been present throughout the whole of this troublesome affair, I'll e'en gie an account mysel to the lord advocate of what we have done." I thought, at the time, there was something fey and overly forward in this, but I assented; for I know not what it was, that seemed to me as if there was something neither right nor regular; indeed, to say the truth, I was no ill pleased that the bailie took on him what he did; so

I allowed him to write himself to the lord advocate; and, as the sequel showed, it was a blessed prudence on my part that I did so. For no sooner did his lordship receive the bailie's terrifying letter, than a special king's messenger was sent to take the spy into Edinburgh Castle; and nothing could surpass the great importance that Bailie Booble made of himself, on the occasion, on getting the man into a coach, and two dragoons to guard him into Glasgow.

But oh! what a dejected man was the miserable Bailie Booble, and what a laugh rose from shop and chamber, when the tidings came out from Edinburgh that "the alien enemy" was but a French cook coming over from Dublin, with the intent to take up the trade of a confectioner in Glasgow, and that the map of the Clyde was nothing but a plan for the outset of a fashionable table—the bailie's island of Arran being the roast beef, and the craig of Ailsa the plum-pudding, and Plada a butter-boat. Nobody enjoyed the jocularities of the business more than myself; but I trembled when I thought of the escape that my honour and character had with the lord advocate. I trow, Bailie Booble never set himself so forward from that day to this.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MEAL MOB.

AFTER the close of the American war, I had, for various reasons of a private nature, a wish to sequester myself for a time, from any very ostensible part in public affairs. Still, however, desiring to retain a mean of resuming my station, and of maintaining my influence in the council, I bespoke Mr Keg to act in my place as deputy for My Lord, who was regularly every year at this time chosen into the provostry.

This Mr Keg was a man who had made a competency by the Isle-of-Man trade, and had come in from the laighlands,

where he had been apparently in the farming line, to live among us; but for many a day, on account of something that happened when he was concerned in the smuggling, he kept himself cannily aloof from all sort of town matters, deporting himself with a most creditable sobriety; in so much, that there was at one time a sough that Mr Pittle, the minister, our friend, had put him on the leet for an elder. That post, however, if it was offered to him, he certainly never accepted; but I jealousy that he took the rumour o't for a sign that his character had ripened into an estimation among us, for he thenceforth began to kithe more in public, and was just a patron to every manifestation of loyalty, putting more lights in his windows in the rejoicing nights of victory than any other body, Mr M'Creesh, the candlemaker, and Collector Cocket, not excepted. Thus, in the fulness of time, he was taken into the council, and no man in the whole corporation could be said to be more zealous than he was. In respect, therefore, to him, I had nothing to fear, so far as the interests, and, over and above all, the loyalty of the corporation, were concerned; but something like a quailing came over my heart, when, after the breaking up of the council on the day of election, he seemed to shy away from me, who had been instrumental to his advancement. However, I trow he had soon reason to repent of that ingratitude, as I may well call it; for when the troubles of the meal mob came upon him, I showed him that I could keep my distance as well as my neighbours.

It was on the Friday, our market-day, that the hobleshow began, and in the afternoon, when the farmers who had brought in their victual for sale were loading their carts to take it home again, the price not having come up to their expectation. All the forenoon, as the wives that went to the meal-market, came back railing with toom pocks and basins, it might have been foretold that the farmers would have to abate their extortion, or that something would come o't before night. My new house and shop being forenent the market, I had noted this, and said to Mrs Pawkie, my wife, what I thought would be the upshot, especially when, towards the afternoon, I observed the common-

ality gathering in the market-place, and no sparing in their tongues to the farmers; so, upon her advice, I directed Thomas Snakers to put on the shutters.

Some of the farmers were loading their carts to go home, when the schools skailed, and all the weans came shouting to the market. Still nothing happened, till tinkler Jean, a randy that had been with the army at the siege of Gibraltar, and, for aught I ken, in the Americas, if no in the Indies likewise;—she came with her meal-basin in her hand, swearing, like a trooper, that if she didna get it filled with meal at fifteen-pence a peck, (the farmers demanded sixteen,) she would have the fu' o't of their hearts' blood; and the mob of thoughtless weans and idle fellows, with shouts and yells, encouraged Jean, and egged her on to a catastrophe. The corruption of the farmers was thus raised, and a young rash lad, the son of James Dyke o' the Mount, whom Jean was blackguarding at a dreadful rate, and upbraiding on account of some ploy he had had with the Dal-mailing session anent a bairn, in an unguarded moment lifted his hand, and shook his neive in Jean's face, and even, as she said, struck her. He himself swore an affidavit that he gave her only a ding out of his way; but be this as it may, at him rushed Jean with open mouth, and broke her timber meal-basin on his head, as it had been an eggshell. Heaven only knows what next ensued; but in a jiffy the whole market-place was as white with scattered meal as if it had been covered with snow, and the farmers were seen flying helter skelter out at the townhead, pursued by the mob, in a hail and whirlwind of stones and glaur. Then the drums were heard beating to arms, and the soldiers were seen flying to their rendezvous. I stood composedly at the dining-room window, and was very thankful that I wasna provost in such a hurricane, when I saw poor Mr Keg, as pale as a dishclout, running to and fro bareheaded, with the town-officers and their halberts at his heels, exhorting and crying till he was as hoarse as a crow, to the angry multitude, that was raging and tossing like a sea in the market-place. Then it was that he felt the consequence of his pridefulness towards me; for, observing me standing in serenity at the window, he came, and in a vehement manner cried to me for the love of

aven to come to his assistance, and pacify the people. It would not have been proper in me to have refused; so out I went in the very nick of time: for when I got to the door, there was the soldiers in battle array, coming marching with fife and drum up the gait with Major Blaze at their head, red and furious in the face, and bent on some bloody business. The first thing I did was to run to the major, just as he was facing the men for a "charge bagonets" on the people, crying to him to halt; for the riot act wasna yet read, and the murder of all that might be slain would lie at his door; at which to hear he stood aghast, and the men halted. Then I flew back to the provost, and I cried to him, "Read the riot act!" which some of the mob hearing, became terrified thereat, none knowing the penalties or consequences thereof, when backed by soldiers; and in a moment, as if they had seen the glimpse of a terrible spirit in the air, the whole multitude dropped the dirt and stones out of their hands, and, turning their backs, flew into doors and closes, and were skailed before we knew where we were. It is not to be told the laud and admiration that I got for my ability in this business; for the major was so well pleased to have been saved from a battle, that, at my suggestion, he wrote an account of the whole business to the commander-in-chief, assuring him that, but for me, and my great weight and authority in the town, nobody could tell what the issue might have been; so that the Lord Advocate, to whom the report was shown by the general, wrote me a letter of thanks in the name of the government; and I, although not provost, was thus seen and believed to be a person of the foremost note and consideration in the town.

But although the mob was dispersed, as I have related, the consequences did not end there; for, the week following, none of the farmers brought in their victual; and there was a great lamentation and moaning in the market-place when, on the Friday, not a single cart from the country was to be seen, but only Simon Laidlaw's, with his timber caps and luggies; and the talk was, that meal would be half-a-crown the peck. The grief, however, of the business wasna visible till the Saturday—the wonted day for the poor to seek their meat—when the

swarm of beggars that came forth was a sight truly calamitous. Many a decent auld woman that had patiently eiked out the slender thread of a weary life with her wheel, in privacy, her scant and want known only to her Maker, was seen going from door to door with the salt tear in her e'e, and looking in the face of the pitiful, being as yet unacquainted with the language of beggary; but the worst sight of all was two bonny bairns, dressed in their best, of a genteel demeanour, going from house to house like the hungry babes in the wood: nobody kent who they were, nor whar they came from; but as I was seeing them served myself at our door, I spoke to them, and they told me that their mother was lying sick and ill at home. They were the orphans of a broken merchant from Glasgow, and, with their mother, had come out to our town the week before, without knowing where else to seek their meat.

Mrs Pawkie, who was a tender-hearted mother herself, took in the bairns on hearing this, and we made of them, and the same night, among our acquaintance, we got a small sum raised to assist their mother, who proved a very well-bred and respectable lady-like creature. When she got better, she was persuaded to take up a school, which she kept for some years, with credit to herself and benefit to the community, till she got a legacy left her by a brother that died in India, the which, being some thousands, caused her to remove into Edinburgh, for the better education of her own children; and it's seldom that legacies are so well bestowed, for she never forgot Mrs Pawkie's kindness, and out of the fore-end of her wealth she sent her a very handsome present. Divers matters of elegance have come to us from her, year by year, since syne, and regularly on the anniversary day of that sore Saturday, as the Saturday following the meal mob was ever after called.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE SECOND PROVOSTRY.

I have had occasion to observe in the course of my experience, that there is not a greater mollifier of the temper and nature of man than a constant flowing in of success and prosperity. From the time that I had been dean of guild, I was sensible of a considerable increase of my worldly means and substance; and although Bailie M'Lucre played me a soople trick at the election, by the inordinate sale and roup of his potatoe-rig, the which tried me, as I do confess, and nettled me with disappointment; yet things, in other respects, went so well with me that, about the eighty-eight, I began to put forth my hand again into public affairs, endowed both with more vigour and activity than it was in the first period of my magisterial functions. Indeed, it may be here proper for me to narrate, that my retiring into the background during the last two or three years, was a thing, as I have said, done on mature deliberation; partly, in order that the weight of my talents might be rightly estimated; and partly, that men might, of their own reflections, come to a proper understanding concerning them, I did not secede from the council. Could I have done that with propriety, I would assuredly not have scrupled to make the sacrifice; but I knew well that, if I was to resign, it would not be easy afterwards to get myself again chosen in. In a word, I was persuaded that I had, at times, carried things a little too highly, and that I had the adversary of a rebellious feeling in the minds and hearts of the corporation against me. However, what I did, answered the end and purpose I had in view; folk began to wonder and think with themselves, what for Mr Pawkie had ceased to bestir himself in public affairs; and the magistrates and council having, on two or three occasions, done very unsatisfactory things, it was said by one, and echoed by another, till the whole town was persuaded of the fact, that, had I lent my shoulder to the wheel, things would not have been as they were. But the matter which did the most service to me at this time, was a rank piece of

idolatry towards my lord, on the part of Bailie M'Lucre, who had again got himself most sickly installed in the guildry. Sundry tacks came to an end in this year of eighty-eight; and among others, the Niggerbrae park, which, lying at a commodious distance from the town, might have been relet with a rise and advantage. But what did the dean of guild do? He, in some secret and clandestine manner, gave a hint to my lord's factor to make an offer for the park on a two nineteen years' lease, at the rent then going—the which was done in my lord's name, his lordship being then provost. The Niggerbrae was accordingly let to him, at the same rent which the town received for it in the sixty-nine. Nothing could be more manifest than that there was some jookerie cookerie in this affair; but in what manner it was done, or how the dean of guild's benefit was to ensue, no one could tell, and few were able to conjecture; for my lord was sorely straitened for money, and had nothing to spare out of hand. However, towards the end of the year, a light broke in upon us.

Gabriel M'Lucre, the dean of guild's fifth son, a fine spirited laddie, somehow got suddenly a cadetey to go to India; and there were uncharitably-minded persons, who said, that this was the payment for the Niggerbrae job to my lord. The outcry, in consequence, both against the dean of guild, and especially against the magistrates and council for consenting thereto, was so extraordinary, and I was so openly upbraided for being so long lukewarm, that I was, in a manner, forced again forward to take a prominent part; but I took good care to let it be well known, that, in resuming my public faculties, I was resolved to take my own way, and to introduce a new method and reformation into all our concerns. Accordingly, at the Michaelmas following, that is, in the eighty-nine, I was a second time chosen to the provostry, with an understanding, that I was to be upheld in the office and dignity for two years; and that sundry improvements, which I thought the town was susceptible of, both in the causey of the streets and the reparation of the kirk, should be set about under my direction; but the way in which I handled the same, and brought them to a satisfactory com-

pleteness and perfection, will supply abundant matter for two chapters.

CHAPTER XV.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STREETS.

IN ancient times, Gudetown had been fortified with ports and gates at the end of the streets; and in troublesome occasions, the country people, as the traditions relate, were in the practice of driving in their families and cattle for shelter. This gave occasion to that great width in our streets, and those of other royal burghs, which is so remarkable; the same being so built to give room and stance for the cattle. But in those days the streets were not paved at the sides, but only in the middle, or, as it was called, the crown of the causey; which was raised and backed upward, to let the rain-water run off into the gutters. In progress of time, however, as the land and kingdom gradually settled down into an orderly state, the farmers and country folk having no cause to drive in their herds and flocks, as in the primitive ages of a rampageous antiquity, the proprietors of houses in the town, at their own cost, began, one after another, to pave the spaces of ground between their steadings and the crown of the causey; the which spaces were called lones, and the lones being considered as private property, the corporation had only regard to the middle portion of the street—that which I have said was named the crown of the causey.

The effect of this separation of interests in a common good began to manifest itself, when the pavement of the crown of the causey, by neglect, became rough and dangerous to loaded carts and gentlemen's carriages passing through the town; in so much that, for some time prior to my second provostry, the carts and carriages made no hesitation of going over the lones, instead of keeping the highway in the middle of the street; at which many of the burgesses made loud and just complaints.

One dark night, the very first Sunday after my restoration to the provostry, there was like to have happened a very sore thing by an old woman, one Peggy Waife, who had been out with her gown-tail over her head for a choppin of strong ale. As she was coming home, with her ale in a greybeard in her hand, a chaise in full bir came upon her and knocked her down, and broke the greybeard and spilt the liquor. The cry was terrible; some thought poor Peggy was killed outright, and wives, with candles in their hands, started out at the doors and windows. Peggy, however, was more terrified than damaged; but the gentry that were in the chaise, being termagant English travellers, swore like dragoons that the streets should be indicted as a nuisance; and when they put up at the inns, two of them came to me, as provost, to remonstrate on the shameful condition of the pavement, and to lodge in my hands the sum of ten pounds for the behoof of Peggy; the which was greater riches than ever the poor creature thought to attain in this world. Seeing they were gentlemen of a right quality, I did what I could to pacify them, by joining in every thing they said in condemnation of the streets; telling them, at the same time, that the improvement of the causey was to be the very first object and care of my provostry. And I bade Mrs Pawkie bring in the wine decanters, and requested them to sit down with me and take a glass of wine and a sugar-biscuit; the civility of which, on my part, soon brought them into a peaceable way of thinking, and they went away, highly commending my politess and hospitality, of which they spoke in the warmest terms to their companion when they returned to the inns, as the waiter who attended them overheard, and told the landlord, who informed me and others of the same in the morning. So that on the Saturday following, when the town-council met, there was no difficulty in getting a minute entered at the sederunt, that the crown of the causey should be forthwith put in a state of reparation.

Having thus gotten the thing determined upon, I then proposed that we should have the work done by contract, and that notice should be given publicly of such being our intent. Some boggling was made to this proposal, it never having been the use

and wont of the corporation, in time past, to do any thing by contract, but just to put whatever was required into the hands of one of the council, who got the work done in the best way he could; by which loose manner of administration great abuses were often allowed to pass unreprieved. But I persisted in my resolution to have the causey renewed by contract; and all the inhabitants of the town gave me credit for introducing such a great reformation into the management of public affairs.

When it was made known that we would receive offers to contract, divers persons came forward; and I was a little at a loss, when I saw such competition, as to which ought to be preferred. At last, I bethought me, to send for the different competitors, and converse with them on the subject quietly; and I found, in Thomas Shovel, the tacksman of the Whinstone-quarry, a discreet and considerate man. His offer was, it is true, not so low as some of the others; but he had facilities to do the work quickly, that none of the rest could pretend to; so, upon a clear understanding of that, with the help of the dean of guild M'Lucre's advocacy, Thomas Shovel got the contract. At first, I could not divine what interest my old friend, the dean of guild, had to be so earnest in the behalf of the offering contractor; in course of time, however, it spunkit out that he was a sleeping partner in the business, by which he made a power of profit. But saving two three carts of stones to big a dyke round the new steading which I had bought a short time before at the town-end, I had no benefit whatever. Indeed, I may take it upon me to say, that should not say it, few provosts, in so great a concern, could have acted more on a principle than I did in this; and if Thomas Shovel, of his free-will, did, at the instigation of the dean of guild, lay down the stones on my ground as aforesaid, the town was not wronged; for, no doubt, he paid me the compliment at some expense of his own profit.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REPAIR OF THE KIRK.

THE repair of the kirk, the next job I took in hand, was not so easily managed as that of the causey; for it seems, in former times, the whole space of the area had been free to the parish in general, and that the lofts were constructions, raised at the special expense of the heritors for themselves. The fronts being for their families, and the back seats for their servants and tenants. In those times there were no such things as pews; but only forms, removeable, as I have heard say, at pleasure.

It, however, happened, in the course of nature, that certain forms came to be sabbathly frequented by the same persons; who, in this manner, acquired a sort of prescriptive right to them. And those persons or families, one after another, finding it would be an ease and convenience to them during divine worship, put up backs to their forms. But still, for many a year, there was no inclosure of pews; the first, indeed, that made a pew, as I have been told, was one Archibald Rafter, a wright, and the grandfather of Mr Rafter, the architect, who has had so much to do with the edification of the new town of Edinburgh. This Archibald's form happened to be near the door, on the left side of the pulpit; and in the winter, when the wind was in the north, it was a very cold seat, which induced him to inclose it round and round, with certain old doors and shutters, which he had acquired in taking down and rebuilding the left wing of the Whinnyhill house. The comfort in which this enabled him and his family to listen to the worship, had an immediate effect; and the example being of a taking nature, in the course of little more than twenty years from the time, the whole area of the kirk had been pewed in a very creditable manner.

Families thus getting, as it were, portions of the church, some, when removing from the town, gave them up to their neighbours on receiving a consideration for the expense they had been at in making the pews; so that, from less to more, the pews so formed became a lettable and a vendible property. It

was, therefore, thought a hard thing, that in the reparation which the seats had come to require in my time, the heritors and corporation should be obligated to pay the cost and expense of what was so clearly the property of others; while it seemed an impossibility to get the whole tot of the proprietors of the pews to bear the expense of new-seating the kirk. We had in the council many a long and weighty sederunt on the subject, without coming to any practical conclusion. At last, I thought the best way, as the kirk was really become a disgrace to the town, would be, for the corporation to undertake the repair entirely, upon an understanding that we were to be paid eighteenpence a bottom-room, *per annum*, by the proprietors of the pews; and, on sounding the heritors, I found them all most willing to consent thereto, glad to be relieved from the awful expense of gutting and replenishing such a great concern as the kirk was. Accordingly, the council having agreed to this proposal, we had plans and estimates made, and notice given to the owners of pews of our intention. The whole proceedings gave the greatest satisfaction possible to the inhabitants in general, who lauded and approved of my discernment more and more.

By the estimate, it was found that the repairs would cost about a thousand pounds; and by the plan, that the seats, at eighteenpence a sitter, would yield better than a hundred pounds a-year; so that there was no scruple, on the part of the town-council, in borrowing the money wanted. This was the first public debt ever contracted by the corporation, and people were very fain to get their money lodged at five per cent on such good security; in so much, that we had a great deal more offered than we required at that time and epoch.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAW PLEA.

THE repair of the kirk was undertaken by contract with William Plane, the joiner, with whom I was in terms at the time

anent the bigging of a land of houses on my new steading at the town-end. A most reasonable man in all things he was, and in no concern of my own had I a better satisfaction than in the house he built for me at the conjuncture when he had the town's work in the kirk; but there was at that period among us a certain person, of the name of Nabal Smeddum, a tobacconist by calling, who, up to this season, had been regarded but as a droll and comical body at a coothy crack. He was, in stature, of the lower order of mankind, but endowed with an inclination towards corpulency, by which he had acquired some show of a belly, and his face was round, and his cheeks both red and sleeky. He was, however, in his personalities, chiefly remarkable for two queer and twinkling little eyes, and for a habitual custom of licking his lips whenever he said any thing of pith or jocosity, or thought that he had done so, which was very often the case. In his apparel, as befitted his trade, he wore a suit of snuff-coloured cloth, and a brown round-eared wig, that curled close in to his neck.

Mr Smeddum, as I have related, was in some estimation for his comicality; but he was a dure hand at an argument, and would not see the plainest truth when it was not on his side of the debate. No occasion or cause, however, had come to pass by which this inherent cross-grainedness was stirred into action, till the affair of reseating the kirk—a measure, as I have mentioned, which gave the best satisfaction; but it happened that, on a Saturday night, as I was going soberly home from a meeting of the magistrates in the clerk's chamber, I by chance recollected that I stood in need of having my box replenished; and accordingly, in the most innocent and harmless manner that it was possible for a man to do, I stepped into this Mr Smeddum, the tobacconist's shop, and while he was compounding my mixture from the two canisters that stood on his counter, and I was in a manner doing nothing but looking at the number of counterfeit sixpences and shillings that were nailed thereon as an admonishment to his customers, he said to me, "So, provost, we're to hae a new lining to the kirk. I wonder, when ye were at it, that ye didna rather think of bigging another frae the

fundament, for I'm thinking the walls are no o' a capacity of strength to outlast this seating."

Knowing, as I did, the tough temper of the body, I can attribute my entering into an argument with him on the subject to nothing but some inconsiderate infatuation; for when I said heedlessly, the walls are very good, he threw the brass snuff-spoon with an ecstasy into one of the canisters, and lifting his two hands into a posture of admiration, cried, as if he had seen an unco—

"Good! surely, provost, ye hae na had an inspection; they're crackit in divers places; they're shotten out wi' infirmity in others. In short, the whole kirk, frae the coping to the fundament, is a fabric smitten wi' a paralytic."

"It's very extraordinar, Mr Smeddum," was my reply, "that nobody has seen a' this but yoursel'."

"Na, if ye will deny the fact, provost," quo' he, "it's o' no service for me to say a word; but there has to a moral certainty been a slackness somewhere, or how has it happened that the wa's were na subjected to a right inspection before this job o' the seating?"

By this time, I had seen the great error into the which I had fallen, by entering on a confabulation with Mr Smeddum; so I said to him, "It's no a matter for you and me to dispute about, so I'll thank you to fill my box;" the which manner of putting an end to the debate he took very ill; and after I left the shop, he laid the marrow of our discourse open to Mr Threeper the writer, who by chance went in, like mysel', to get a supply of rappee for the Sabbath. That limb of the law discerning a sediment of litigation in the case, eggit on Mr Smeddum into a persuasion that the seating of the kirk was a thing which the magistrates had no legal authority to undertake. At this critical moment, my ancient adversary and seeming friend, the dean of guild, happened to pass the door, and the bickering snuff-man seeing him, cried to him to come in. It was a very unfortunate occurrence; for Mr M'Lucre having a secret interest, as I have intimated, in the whinstone quarry, when he heard of taking down walls and bigging them up again, he listened with greedy

ears to the dubieties of Mr Threeper, and loudly, and to the heart's content of Mr Smeddum, condemned the frailty and infirmity of the kirk, as a building in general.

It would be overly tedious to mention, however, all the outs and ins of the affair ; but, from less to more, a faction was begotten, and grew to head, and stirring among the inhabitants of the town, not only with regard to the putting of new seats within the old walls, but likewise as to the power of the magistrates to lay out any part of the public funds in the reparation of the kirk ; and the upshot was, a contribution among certain malecontents, to enable Mr Threeper to consult counsel on all the points.

As, in all similar cases, the parties applying for legal advice were heartened into a plea by the opinion they got, and the town-council was thrown into the greatest consternation by receiving notice that the malecontents were going to extremities.

Two things I saw it was obligational on me to urge forward ; the one was to go on still with the reparations, and the other to contest the law-suit, although some were for waiting in the first case till the plea was settled, and in the second to make no defence, but to give up our intention anent the new-seating. But I thought that, as we had borrowed the money for the repairs, we should proceed ; and I had a vista that the contribution raised by the Smeddumites, as they were called, would run out, being from their own pockets, whereas we fought with the public purse in our hand ; and, by dint of exhortation to that effect, I carried the majority to go into my plan, which in the end was most gratifying, for the kirk was in a manner made as good as new, and the contributitional stock of the Smeddumites was entirely rookit by the lawyers, who would fain have them to form another, assuring them that, no doubt, the legal point was in their favour. But every body knows the uncertainty of a legal opinion ; and although the case was given up, for lack of a fund to carry it on, there was a living ember of discontent left in its ashes, ready to kindle into a flame on the first puff of popular dissatisfaction.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE FAIRS.

THE spirit by which the Smeddumites were actuated in ecclesiastical affairs, was a type and taste of the great distemper with which all the world was, more or less, at the time inflamed, and which cast the ancient state and monarchy of France into the perdition of anarchy and confusion. I think, upon the whole, however, that our royal burgh was not afflicted to any very dangerous degree, though there was a sort of itch of it among a few of the sedentary orders, such as the weavers and shoemakers, who, by the nature of sitting long in one posture, are apt to become subject to the flatulence of theoretical opinions; but although this was my notion, yet knowing how much better the king and government were acquainted with the true condition of things than I could to a certainty be, I kept a steady eye on the proceedings of the ministers and parliament at London, taking them for an index and model for the management of the public concerns, which, by the grace of God, and the handling of my friends, I was raised up and set forward to undertake.

Seeing the great dread and anxiety that was above, as to the inordinate liberty of the multitude, and how necessary it was to bridle popularity, which was become rampant and ill to ride, kicking at all established order, and trying to throw both king and nobles from the saddle, I resolved to discountenance all tumultuous meetings, and to place every reasonable impediment in the way of multitudes assembling together: indeed, I had for many years been of opinion, that fairs were become a great political evil to the regular shopkeepers, by reason of the packmen, and other travelling merchants, coming with their wares and underselling us; so that both private interest and public principle incited me on to do all in my power to bring our fair-days into disrepute. It cannot be told what a world of thought and consideration this cost me before I lighted on the right method, nor, without a dive into the past times of antiquity,

is it in the power of man to understand the difficulties of the matter.

Some of our fair-days were remnants of the papistical idolatry, and instituted of old by the Pope and Cardinals, in order to make an income from the vice and immorality that was usually rife at the same. These, in the main points, were only market-days of a blither kind than the common. The country folks came in dressed in their best, the schools got the play, and a long rank of sweet-wives and their stands, covered with the wonted dainties of the occasion, occupied the sunny side of the High Street; while the shady side was, in like manner, taken possession of by the packmen, who, in their booths, made a marvellous display of goods of an inferior quality, with laces and ribands of all colours, hanging down in front, and twirling like pinnets in the wind. There was likewise the allurements of some compendious show of wild beasts; in short, a swatch of every thing that the art of man has devised for such occasions, to wile away the bawbee.

Besides the fairs of this sort, that may be said to be of a pious origin, there were others of a more boisterous kind, that had come of the times of trouble, when the trades paraded with war-like weapons, and the banners of their respective crafts; and in every seventh year we had a resuscitation of king Crispianus in all his glory and regality, with the man in the coat-of-mail, of bell-metal, and the dukes, and lord mayor of London, at the which, the influx of lads and lasses from the country was just prodigious, and the rioting and rampaging at night, the brulies and the dancing, was worse than Vanity Fair in the Pilgrim's Progress.

To put down, and utterly to abolish, by stress of law, or authority, any ancient pleasure of the commonality, I had learned, by this time, was not wisdom, and that the fairs were only to be effectually suppressed by losing their temptations, and so to cease to call forth any expectation of merriment among the people. Accordingly, with respect to the fairs of pious origin, I, without expounding my secret motives, persuaded the council, that, having been at so great an expense in new-paving the streets, we ought not to permit the heavy caravans of wild beasts

to occupy, as formerly, the front of the Tolbooth towards the Cross; but to order them, for the future, to keep at the Greenhead. This was, in a manner, expurgating them out of the town altogether; and the consequence was, that the people, who were wont to assemble in the High Street, came to be divided, part gathering at the Greenhead, round the shows, and part remaining among the stands and the booths; thus an appearance was given of the fairs being less attended than formerly, and gradually, year after year, the venerable race of sweet-wives, and chatty packmen, that were so detrimental to the shopkeepers, grew less and less numerous, until the fairs fell into insignificance.

At the parade fair, the remnant of the weapon-showing, I proceeded more roundly to work, and resolved to debar, by proclamation, all persons from appearing with arms; but the deacons of the trades spared me the trouble of issuing the same, for they dissuaded their crafts from parading. Nothing, however, so well helped me out as the volunteers, of which I will speak by and by; for when the war began, and they were formed, nobody could afterwards abide to look at the fantastical and disorderly marching of the trades, in their processions and parading; so that, in this manner, all the glory of the fairs being shorn and expunged, they have fallen into disrepute, and have suffered a natural suppression.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE VOLUNTEERING.

THE volunteers began in the year 1793, when the democrats in Paris threatened the downfall and utter subversion of kings, lords, and commons. As became us who were of the council, we drew up an address to his majesty, assuring him that our lives and fortunes were at his disposal. To the which dutiful address, we received, by return of post, a very gracious answer;

and, at the same time, the lord-lieutenant gave me a bit hint, that it would be very pleasant to his majesty to hear that we had volunteers in our town, men of creditable connexions, and willing to defend their property.

When I got this note from his lordship, I went to Mr Pipe, the wine-merchant, and spoke to him concerning it, and we had some discreet conversation on the same; in the which it was agreed between us that, as I was now rather inclined to a corpulency of parts, and being likewise chief civil magistrate, it would not do to set myself at the head of a body of soldiers, but that the consequence might be made up to me in the clothing of the men; so I consented to put the business into his hands upon this understanding. Accordingly, he went the same night with me to Mr Dinton, that was in the general merchandizing line, a part-owner in vessels, a trafficker in corn, and now and then a canny discounteer of bills, at a moderate rate, to folk in straits and difficulties. And we told him—the same being agreed between us, as the best way of fructifying the job to a profitable issue—that, as provost, I had got an intimation to raise a corps of volunteers, and that I thought no better hand could be got for a co-operation than him and Mr Pipe, who was pointed out to me as a gentleman well qualified for the command.

Mr Dinton, who was a proud man, and an offset from one of the county families, I could see was not overly pleased at the preferment over him given to Mr Pipe, so that I was in a manner constrained to loot a sort a-jee, and to wile him into good-humour with all the ability in my power, by saying that it was natural enough of the king and government to think of Mr Pipe as one of the most proper men in the town, he paying, as he did, the largest sum of the king's dues at the excise, and being, as we all knew, in a great correspondence with foreign ports—and I winkit to Mr Pipe as I said this, and he could with a difficulty keep his countenance at hearing how I so beguiled Mr Dinton into a spirit of loyalty for the raising of the volunteers.

The ice being thus broken, next day we had a meeting, before the council met, to take the business into public consideration, and we thereat settled on certain creditable persons in the town,

of a known principle, as the fittest to be officers under the command of Mr Pipe, as commandant, and Mr Dinton, as his colleague under him. We agreed among us, as the custom was in other places, that they should be elected major, captain, lieutenants, and ensigns, by the free votes of the whole corps, according to the degrees that we had determined for them. In the doing of this, and the bringing it to pass, my skill and management was greatly approved and extolled by all who had a peep behind the curtain.

The town-council being, as I have intimated, convened to hear the gracious answer to the address read, and to take into consideration the suggesting anent the volunteering, met in the clerk's chamber, where we agreed to call a meeting of the inhabitants of the town by proclamation, and by a notice in the church. This being determined, Mr Pipe and Mr Dinton got a paper drawn up, and privately, before the Sunday, a number of their genteeler friends, including those whom we had noted down to be elected officers, set their names as willing to be volunteers.

On the Sunday, Mr Pittle, at my instigation, preached a sermon, showing forth the necessity of arming ourselves in the defence of all that was dear to us. It was a discourse of great method and sound argument, but not altogether so quickened with pith and bir as might have been wished for; but it paved the way to the reading out of the summons for the inhabitants to meet the magistrates in the church on the Thursday following, for the purpose, as it was worded by the town-clerk, to take into consideration the best means of saving the king and kingdom in the then monstrous crisis of public affairs.

The discourse, with the summons, and a rumour and whispering that had in the mean time taken place, caused the desired effect; in so much, that, on the Thursday, there was a great congregation of the male portion of the people. At the which, old Mr Dravel—a genteel man he was, well read in matters of history, though somewhat over-portioned with a conceit of himself—got up on the table, in one of the table-seats forenent the poopit, and made a speech suitable to the occasion; in the which he set forth what manful things had been done of old by the

Greeks and the Romans for their country, and, waxing warm with his subject, he cried out with a loud voice, towards the end of the discourse, giving at the same time a stamp with his foot, "Come, then, as men and as citizens; the cry is for your altars and your God."

"Gude save's, Mr Dravel, are ye gane by yoursel?" cried Willy Coggle from the front of the loft, a daft body that was aye far ben-on all public occasions—"to think that our God's a Pagan image in need of sick feckless help as the like o' thine?" The which outcry of Willy raised a most extraordinary laugh at the fine paternoster, about the ashes of our ancestors, that Mr Dravel had been so vehemently rehearsing; and I was greatly afraid that the solemnity of the day would be turned into a ridicule. However, Mr Pipe, who was upon the whole a man no without both sense and capacity, rose and said, that our business was to strengthen the hands of government, by coming forward as volunteers; and therefore, without thinking it necessary, among the people of this blessed land, to urge any arguments in furtherance of that object, he would propose that a volunteer corps should be raised; and he begged leave of me, who, as provost, was in the chair, to read a few words that he had hastily thrown together on the subject, as the outlines of a pact of agreement among those who might be inclined to join with him. I should here, however, mention, that the said few words of a pact was the costive product overnight of no small endeavour between me and Mr Dinton as well as him.

When he had thus made his motion, Mr Dinton, as we had concerted, got up and seconded the same, pointing out the liberal spirit in which the agreement was drawn, as every person signing it was eligible to be an officer of any rank, and every man had a vote in the preferment of the officers. All which was mightily applauded; and upon this I rose, and said, "It was a pleasant thing for me to have to report to his majesty's government the loyalty of the inhabitants of our town, and the unanimity of the volunteering spirit among them—and to testify," said I, "to all the world, how much we are sensible of the blessings of the true liberty we enjoy, I would suggest that the matter of the volunteering be left entirely to Mr Pipe and Mr Dinton, with a few

other respectable gentlemen, as a committee, to carry the same into effect;" and with that I looked, as it were, round the church, and then said, "There's Mr Oranger, a better couldna be joined with them." He was a most creditable man, and a grocer, that we had waled out for a captain; so I desired, having got a nod of assent from him, that Mr Oranger's name might be added to their's, as one of the committee. In like manner I did by all the rest whom we had previously chosen. Thus, in a manner, predisposing the public towards them for officers.

In the course of the week, by the endeavours of the committee, a sufficient number of names was got to the paper, and the election of the officers came on on the Tuesday following; at which, though there was a sort of a contest, and nothing could be a fairer election, yet the very persons that we had chosen were elected, though some of them had but a narrow chance. Mr Pipe was made the commandant, by a superiority of only two votes over Mr Dinton.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CLOTHING.

It was an understood thing at first, that, saving in the matter of guns and other military implements, the volunteers were to be at all their own expenses; out of which, both tribulation and disappointment ensued; for when it came to be determined about the uniforms, Major Pipe found that he could by no possibility wise all the furnishing to me, every one being disposed to get his regimentals from his own merchant; and there was also a division anent the colour of the same, many of the doucer sort of the men being blate of appearing in scarlet and gold-lace, insisting with a great earnestness, almost to a sedition, on the uniform being blue. So that the whole advantage of a contract was frustrated, and I began to be sorry that I had not made a point of being, notwithstanding the alleged weight and impediment of my corpulence, the major-commandant myself. How-

ever, things, after some time, began to take a turn for the better; and the art of raising volunteers being better understood in the kingdom, Mr Pipe went into Edinburgh, and upon some conference with the lord advocate, got permission to augment his force by another company, and leave to draw two days' pay a week for account of the men, and to defray the necessary expenses of the corps. The doing of this bred no little agitation in the same; and some of the forward and upsetting spirits of the younger privates, that had been smitten, though not in a disloyal sense, with the insubordinate spirit of the age, clamoured about the rights of the original bargain with them, insisting that the officers had no privilege to sell their independence, and a deal of trash of that sort, and finally withdrew from the corps, drawing, to the consternation of the officers, the pay that had been taken in their names; and which the officers could not refuse, although it was really wanted for the contingencies of the service, as Major Pipe himself told me.

When the corps had thus been rid of these turbulent spirits, the men grew more manageable and rational, assenting by little and little to all the proposals of the officers, until there was a true military dominion of discipline gained over them; and a joint contract was entered into between Major Pipe and me, for a regular supply of all necessaries, in order to insure a uniform appearance, which, it is well known, is essential to a right discipline. In the end, when the eyes of men in civil stations had got accustomed to military show and parade, it was determined to change the colour of the cloth from blue to red, the former having at first been preferred, and worn for some time; in the accomplishment of which change I had (and why should I disguise the honest fact?) my share of the advantage which the kingdom at large drew, in that period of anarchy and confusion, from the laudable establishment of a volunteer force.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PRESSGANG.

DURING the same just and necessary war for all that was dear to us, in which the volunteers were raised, one of the severest trials happened to me that ever any magistrate was subjected to. I had, at the time, again subsided into an ordinary counsellor; but it so fell out that, by reason of Mr Shuttlethrift, who was then provost, having occasion and need to go into Glasgow upon some affairs of his own private concerns, he being interested in the Kilbeacon cotton-mill; and Mr Dalrye, the bailie, who should have acted for him, being likewise from home, anent a plea he had with a neighbour concerning the bounds of their rigs and gables; the whole authority and power of the magistrates devolved, by a courtesy on the part of their colleague, Bailie Hammerman, into my hands.

For some time before, there had been an ingathering among us of sailor lads from the neighbouring ports, who on their arrival, in order to shun the pressgangs, left their vessels and came to scog themselves with us. By this, a rumour or a suspicion rose that the men-of-war's men were suddenly to come at the dead hour of the night and sweep them all away. Heaven only knows whether this notice was bred in the fears and jealousies of the people, or was a humane inkling given, by some of the men-of-war's men, to put the poor sailor lads on their guard, was never known. But on a Saturday night, as I was on the eve of stepping into my bed, I shall never forget it—Mrs Pawkie was already in, and as sound as a door-nail—and I was just crooking my mouth to blow out the candle, when I heard a rap. As our bed-room window was over the door, I looked out. It was a dark night; but I could see by a glaik of light from a neighbour's window, that there was a man with a cocked hat at the door.

“What's your will?” said I to him, as I looked out at him in my nightcap. He made no other answer, but that he was one of his majesty's officers, and had business with the justice.

I did not like this Englifycation and voice of claim and authority; however, I drew on my stockings and breeks again, and taking my wife's flannel coaty about my shoulders—for I was then troubled with the rheumatiz—I went down, and, opening the door, let in the lieutenant.

“I come,” said he, “to show you my warrant and commission, and to acquaint you that, having information of several able-bodied seamen being in the town, I mean to make a search for them.”

I really did not well know what to say at the moment; but I begged him, for the love of peace and quietness, to defer his work till the next morning: but he said he must obey his orders; and he was sorry that it was his duty to be on so disagreeable a service, with many other things, that showed something like a sense of compassion that could not have been hoped for in the captain of a pressgang.

When he had said this, he then went away, saying, for he saw my tribulation, that it would be as well for me to be prepared in case of any riot. This was the worst news of all; but what could I do? I thereupon went again to Mrs Pawkie, and shaking her awake, told her what was going on, and a terrified woman she was. I then dressed myself with all possible expedition, and went to the town-clerk's, and we sent for the town-officers, and then adjourned to the council-chamber to wait the issue of what might betide.

In my absence, Mrs Pawkie rose out of her bed, and by some wonderful instinct collecting all the bairns, went with them to the minister's house, as to a place of refuge and sanctuary.

Shortly after we had been in the council-room, I opened the window and looked out, but all was still; the town was lying in the defencelessness of sleep, and nothing was heard but the clicking of the town-clock in the steeple over our heads. By and by, however, a sough and pattering of feet was heard approaching; and shortly after, in looking out, we saw the pressgang, headed by their officers, with cutlasses by their side, and great club-sticks in their hands. They said nothing; but the sound of their feet on the silent stones of the causey, was as the noise of a dreadful engine. They passed, and went on; and

all that were with me in the council stood at the windows and listened. In the course of a minute or two after, two lassies, with a callan, that had been out, came flying and wailing, giving the alarm to the town. Then we heard the driving of the bludgeons on the doors, and the outcries of terrified women; and presently after we saw the poor chased sailors running in their shirts, with their clothes in their hands, as if they had been felons and blackguards caught in guilt, and flying from the hands of justice.

The town was awakened with the din as with the cry of fire; and lights came starting forward, as it were, to the windows. The women were out with lamentations and vows of vengeance. I was in a state of horror unspeakable. Then came some three or four of the pressgang with a struggling sailor in their clutches, with nothing but his trousers on—his shirt riven from his back in the fury. Syne came the rest of the gang and their officers, scattered as it were with a tempest of mud and stones, pursued and battered by a troop of desperate women and weans, whose fathers and brothers were in jeopardy. And these were followed by the wailing wife of the pressed man, with her five bairns, clamouring in their agony to heaven against the king and government for the outrage. I couldna listen to the fearful justice of their outcry, but sat down in a corner of the council-chamber with my fingers in my ears.

In a little while a shout of triumph rose from the mob, and we heard them returning, and I felt, as it were, relieved; but the sound of their voices became hoarse and terrible as they drew near, and, in a moment, I heard the jingle of twenty broken windows rattle in the street. My heart misgave me; and, indeed, it was my own windows. They left not one pane unbroken; and nothing kept them from demolishing the house to the ground-stone but the exhortations of Major Pipe, who, on hearing the uproar, was up and out, and did all in his power to arrest the fury of the tumult. It seems, the mob had taken it into their heads that I had signed what they called the press-warrants; and on driving the gang out of the town, and rescuing the man, they came to revenge themselves on me and mine; which is the cause that made me say it was a miracu-

lous instinct that led Mrs Pawkie to take the family to Mr Pittle's; for, had they been in the house, it is not to be told what the consequences might have been.

Before morning the riot was ended, but the damage to my house was very great; and I was intending, as the public had done the deed, that the town should have paid for it. "But," said Mr Keelivine, the town-clerk, "I think you may do better; and this calamity, if properly handled to the government, may make your fortune." I reflected on the hint; and accordingly, the next day, I went over to the regulating captain of the press-gang, and represented to him the great damage and detriment which I had suffered, requesting him to represent to government that it was all owing to the part I had taken in his behalf. To this, for a time, he made some scruple of objection; but at last he drew up, in my presence, a letter to the lords of the admiralty, telling what he had done, and how he and his men had been ill-used, and that the house of the chief-magistrate of the town had been in a manner destroyed by the rioters.

By the same post I wrote off myself to the lord advocate, and likewise to the secretary of state, in London; commending, very properly, the prudent and circumspect manner in which the officer had come to apprise me of his duty, and giving as faithful an account as I well could of the riot; concluding with a simple notification of what had been done to my house, and the outcry that might be raised in the town were any part of the town's funds to be used in the repairs.

Both the lord advocate and Mr Secretary of State wrote me back by retour of post, thanking me for my zeal in the public service; and I was informed that, as it might not be expedient to agitate in the town the payment of the damage which my house had received, the lords of the treasury would indemnify me for the same; and this was done in a manner which showed the blessings we enjoy under our most venerable constitution; for I was not only thereby enabled, by what I got, to repair the windows, but to build up a vacant steading; the same which I settled last year on my dochter, Marion, when she was married to Mr Geery, of the Gatherton Holme.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WIG DINNER.

THE affair of the pressgang gave great concern to all of the council; for it was thought that the loyalty of the burgh would be called in question, and doubted by the king's ministers, notwithstanding our many assurances to the contrary; the which sense and apprehension begat among us an inordinate anxiety to manifest our principles on all expedient occasions. In the doing of this, divers curious and comical things came to pass; but the most comical of all was what happened at the Michaelmas dinner following the riot.

The weather, for some days before, had been raw for that time of the year, and Michaelmas-day was, both for wind and wet and cold, past ordinar; in so much that we were obligated to have a large fire in the council-chamber, where we dined. Round this fire, after drinking his majesty's health and the other appropriate toasts, we were sitting as cozy as could be; and every one the longer he sat, and the oftener his glass visited the punch-bowl, waxed more and more royal, till every body was in a most hilarious temperament, singing songs and joining chorus with the greatest cordiality.

It happened, among others of the company, there was a gash old carl, the laird of Bodletonbrae, who was a very capital hand at a joke; and he, chancing to notice that the whole of the magistrates and town-council then present wore wigs, feigned to become out of all bounds with the demonstrations of his devotion to king and country; and others that were there, not wishing to appear any thing behind him in the same, vied in their sprog of patriotism, and bragging in a manful manner of what, in the hour of trial, they would be seen to do. Bodletonbrae was all the time laughing in his sleeve at the way he was working them on, till at last, after they had flung the glasses twice or thrice over their shoulders, he proposed we should throw our wigs in the fire next. Surely there was some glammer about us that caused us not to observe his devilry, for

the laird had no wig on his head. Be that, however, as it may, the instigation took effect, and in the twinkling of an eye every scalp was bare, and the chimley roaring with the roasting of gude kens how many powdered wigs well fattened with pomatum. But scarcely was the deed done, till every one was admonished of his folly, by the laird laughing, like a being out of his senses, at the number of bald heads and shaven crowns that his device had brought to light, and by one and all of us experiencing the coldness of the air on the nakedness of our upper parts.

The first thing that we then did was to send the town-officers, who were waiting on as usual for the dribbles of the bottles and the leavings in the bowls, to bring our nightcaps, but I trow few were so lucky as me, for I had a spare wig at home, which Mrs Pawkie, my wife, a most considerate woman, sent to me; so that I was, in a manner, to all visibility, none the worse of the ploy; but the rest of the council were perfect oddities within their wigs, and the sorest thing of all was, that the exploit of burning the wigs had got wind; so that, when we left the council-room, there was a great congregation of funny weans and misleart trades' lads assembled before the tolbooth, shouting, and like as if they were out of the body with daffing, to see so many of the heads of the town in their nightcaps, and no, may be, just so solid at the time as could have been wished. Nor did the matter rest here; for the generality of the sufferers being in a public way, were obligated to appear the next day in their shops, and at their callings, with their nightcaps—for few of them had two wigs like me—by which no small merriment ensued, and was continued for many a day. It would hardly, however, be supposed, that in such a matter any thing could have redounded to my advantage; but so it fell out, that by my wife's prudence in sending me my other wig, it was observed by the commonality, when we sallied forth to go home, that I had on my wig, and it was thought I had a very meritorious command of myself, and was the only man in the town fit for a magistrate; for in every thing I was seen to be most cautious and considerate. I could not, however, when I saw the turn the affair took to my advantage, but reflect on what small and

visionary grounds the popularity of public men will sometimes rest.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DEATH OF MR M'LUCRE.

SHORTLY after the affair recorded in the foregoing chapter, an event came to pass in the burgh that had been for some time foreseen.

My old friend and adversary, Bailie M'Lucre, being now a man well stricken in years, was one night, in going home from a gavawlling with some of the neighbours at Mr Shuttlethrift's, the manufacturer's, (the bailie, canny man, never liket ony thing of the sort at his own cost and outlay,) having partaken largely of the bowl, for the manufacturer was of a blithe humour—the bailie, as I was saying, in going home, was overtaken by an apoplexy just at the threshold of his own door, and although it did not kill him outright, it shoved him, as it were, almost into the very grave; in so much that he never spoke an articulate word during the several weeks he was permitted to doze away his latter end; and accordingly he died, and was buried in a very creditable manner to the community, in consideration of the long space of time he had been a public man among us.

But what rendered the event of his death, in my opinion, the more remarkable, was, that I considered with him the last remnant of the old practice of managing the concerns of the town came to a period. For now that he is dead and gone, and also all those whom I found conjunct with him, when I came into power and office, I may venture to say, that things in yon former times were not guided so thoroughly by the hand of a disinterested integrity as in these latter years. On the contrary, it seemed to be the use and wont of men in public trusts, to think they were free to indemnify themselves in a left-handed way for the time and trouble they bestowed in the same. But

the thing was not so far wrong in principle as in the hugger-mugger way in which it was done, and which gave to it a guilty colour, that, by the judicious stratagem of a right system, it would never have had. In sooth to say, through the whole course of my public life, I met with no greater difficulties and trials than in cleansing myself from the old habitudes of office. For I must in verity confess, that I myself partook, in a degree, at my beginning, of the caterpillar nature ; and it was not until the light of happier days called forth the wings of my endowment, that I became conscious of being raised into public life for a better purpose than to prey upon the leaves and flourishes of the commonwealth. So that, if I have seemed to speak lightly of those doings that are now denominated corruptions, I hope it was discerned therein that I did so rather to intimate that such things were, than to consider them as in themselves commendable. Indeed, in thir notations, I have endeavoured, in a manner, to be governed by the spirit of the times in which the transactions happened ; for I have lived long enough to remark, that if we judge of past events by present motives, and do not try to enter into the spirit of the age when they took place, and to see them with the eyes with which they were really seen, we shall conceit many things to be of a bad and wicked character that were not thought so harshly of by those who witnessed them, nor even by those who, perhaps, suffered from them. While, therefore, I think it has been of a great advantage to the public to have survived that method of administration in which the like of Bailie M'Lucre was engendered, I would not have it understood that I think the men who held the public trusts in those days a whit less honest than the men of my own time. The spirit of their own age was upon them, as that of ours is upon us, and their ways of working the wherry entered more or less into all their trafficking, whether for the commonality, or for their own particular behoof and advantage.

I have been thus large and frank in my reflections anent the death of the bailie, because, poor man, he had outlived the times for which he was qualified ; and, instead of the merriment and jocularly that his wily by-hand ways used to cause among his neighbours, the rising generation began to pick and dab at him,

in such a manner, that, had he been much longer spared, it is to be feared he would not have been allowed to enjoy his earnings both with ease and honour. However, he got out of the world with some respect, and the matters of which I have now to speak, are exalted, both in method and principle, far above the personal considerations that took something from the public virtue of his day and generation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WINDY YULE.

IT was in the course of the winter, after the decease of Bailie M'Lucre, that the great loss of lives took place, which every body agreed was one of the most calamitous things that had for many a year befallen the town.

Three or four vessels were coming with cargoes of grain from Ireland; another from the Baltic with Norawa deals; and a third from Bristol, where she had been on a charter for some Greenock merchants.

It happened that, for a time, there had been contrary winds, against which no vessel could enter the port, and the ships, whereof I have been speaking, were all lying together at anchor in the bay, waiting a change of weather. These five vessels were owned among ourselves, and their crews consisted of fathers and sons belonging to the place, so that, both by reason of interest and affection, a more than ordinary concern was felt for them; for the sea was so rough, that no boat could live in it to go near them, and we had our fears that the men on board would be very ill off. Nothing, however, occurred but this natural anxiety, till the Saturday, which was Yule. In the morning the weather was blasty and sleety, waxing more and more tempestuous till about mid-day, when the wind checked suddenly round from the nor-east to the sou-west, and blew a gale as if the prince of the powers of the air was doing his utmost to work

mischief. The rain blattered, the windows clattered, the shop-shutters flapped, pigs from the lum-heads came rattling down like thunder-claps, and the skies were dismal both with cloud and carry. Yet, for all that, there was in the streets a stir and a busy visitation between neighbours, and every one went to their high windows, to look at the five poor barks that were warsling against the strong arm of the elements of the storm and the ocean.

Still the lift gloomed, and the wind roared, and it was as doleful a sight as ever was seen in any town afflicted with calamity, to see the sailors' wives, with their red cloaks about their heads, followed by their hirpling and disconsolate bairns, going one after another to the kirkyard, to look at the vessels where their helpless breadwinners were battling with the tempest. My heart was really sorrowful, and full of a sore anxiety to think of what might happen to the town, whereof so many were in peril, and to whom no human magistracy could extend the arm of protection. Seeing no abatement of the wrath of heaven, that howled and roared around us, I put on my big-coat, and taking my staff in my hand, having tied down my hat with a silk handkerchief, towards gloaming I walked likewise to the kirkyard, where I beheld such an assemblage of sorrow, as few men in situation have ever been put to the trial to witness.

In the lea of the kirk many hundreds of the town were gathered together; but there was no discourse among them. The major part were sailors' wives and weans, and at every new thud of the blast, a sob rose, and the mothers drew their bairns closer in about them, as if they saw the visible hand of a foe raised to smite them. Apart from the multitude, I observed three or four young lasses standing behind the Whinnyhill families' tomb, and I jealoused that they had joes in the ships; for they often looked to the bay, with long necks and sad faces, from behind the monument. A widow woman, one old Mary Weery, that was a lameter, and dependent on her son, who was on board the Louping Meg, (as the Lovely Peggy was nicknamed at the shore,) stood by herself, and every now and then wrung her hands, crying, with a woeful voice, "The Lord giveth and the

Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord ;"—but it was manifest to all that her faith was fainting within her. But of all the piteous objects there, on that doleful evening, none troubled my thoughts more than three motherless children, that belonged to the mate of one of the vessels in the jeopardy. He was an Englishman that had been settled some years in the town, where his family had neither kith nor kin ; and his wife having died about a month before, the bairns, of whom the eldest was but nine or so, were friendless enough, though both my gudewife, and other well-disposed ladies, paid them all manner of attention till their father would come home. The three poor little things, knowing that he was in one of the ships, had been often out and anxious, and they were then sitting under the lee of a headstone, near their mother's grave, chattering and creeping closer and closer at every squall. Never was such an orphan-like sight seen.

When it began to be so dark that the vessels could no longer be discerned from the churchyard, many went down to the shore, and I took the three babies home with me, and Mrs Pawkie made tea for them, and they soon began to play with our own younger children, in blythe forgetfulness of the storm ; every now and then, however, the eldest of them, when the shutters rattled and the lum-head roared, would pause in his innocent daffing, and cower in towards Mrs Pawkie, as if he was daunted and dismayed by something he knew not what.

Many a one that night walked the sounding shore in sorrow, and fires were lighted along it to a great extent ; but the darkness and the noise of the raging deep, and the howling wind, never intermitted till about midnight : at which time a message was brought to me, that it might be needful to send a guard of soldiers to the beach, for that broken masts and tackle had come in, and that surely some of the barks had perished. I lost no time in obeying this suggestion, which was made to me by one of the owners of the Louping Meg ; and to show that I sincerely sympathized with all those in affliction, I rose and dressed myself, and went down to the shore, where I directed several old boats to be drawn up by the fires, and blankets to be brought,

and cordials prepared, for them that might be spared with life to reach the land; and I walked the beach with the mourners till the morning.

As the day dawned, the wind began to abate in its violence, and to wear away from the sou-west into the norit, but it was soon discovered that some of the vessels with the corn had perished; for the first thing seen, was a long fringe of tangle and grain along the line of the highwater mark, and every one strained with greedy and grieved eyes, as the daylight brightened, to discover which had suffered. But I can proceed no further with the dismal recital of that doleful morning. Let it suffice here to be known, that, through the haze, we at last saw three of the vessels lying on their beam-ends with their masts broken, and the waves riding like the furious horses of destruction over them. What had become of the other two was never known; but it was supposed that they had foundered at their anchors, and that all on board perished.

The day being now Sabbath, and the whole town idle, every body in a manner was down on the beach, to help and mourn as the bodies, one after another, were cast out by the waves. Alas! few were the better of my provident preparation, and it was a thing not to be described, to see, for more than a mile along the coast, the new-made widows and fatherless bairns, mourning and weeping over the corpses of those they loved. Seventeen bodies were, before ten o'clock, carried to the desolated dwellings of their families; and when old Thomas Pull, the betheral, went to ring the bell for public worship, such was the universal sorrow of the town, that Nanse Donsie, an idiot natural, ran up the street to stop him, crying, in the voice of a pardonable desperation, "Wha, in sic a time, can praise the Lord?"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SUBSCRIPTION.

THE calamity of the storm opened and disposed the hearts of the whole town to charity; and it was a pleasure to behold the manner in which the tide of sympathy flowed towards the sufferers. Nobody went to the church in the forenoon; but when I had returned home from the shore, several of the council met at my house to confer anent the desolation, and it was concerted among us, at my suggestion, that there should be a meeting of the inhabitants called by the magistrates, for the next day, in order to take the public compassion with the tear in the eye—which was accordingly done by Mr Pittle himself from the pulpit, with a few judicious words on the heavy dispensation. And the number of folk that came forward to subscribe was just wonderful. We got well on to a hundred pounds in the first two hours, besides many a bundle of old clothes. But one of the most remarkable things in the business was done by Mr Macandoe. He was, in his original, a lad of the place, who had gone into Glasgow, where he was in a topping line; and happening to be on a visit to his friends at the time, he came to the meeting and put down his name for twenty guineas, which he gave me in bank-notes—a sum of such liberality as had never been given to the town from one individual man, since the mortification of fifty pounds that we got by the will of Major Bravery that died in Cheltenham, in England, after making his fortune in India. The sum total of the subscription, when we got my lord's five-and-twenty guineas, was better than two hundred pounds sterling—for even several of the country gentlemen were very generous contributors, and it is well known that they are not inordinately charitable, especially to town folks—but the distribution of it was no easy task, for it required a discrimination of character as well as of necessities. It was at first proposed to give it over to the session. I knew, however, that, in their hands, it would do no good; for Mr Pittle, the minister, was a vain sort of a body, and easy to be

fleeched, and the bold and the bardy with him would be sure to come in for a better share than the meek and the modest, who might be in greater want. So I set myself to consider what was the best way of proceeding; and truly, upon reflection, there are few events in my history that I look back upon with more satisfaction than the part I performed in this matter; for, before going into any division of the money, I proposed that we should allot it to three classes—those who were destitute; those who had some help, but large families; and those to whom a temporality would be sufficient—and that we should make a visitation to the houses of all the sufferers, in order to class them under their proper heads aright. By this method, and together with what I had done personally in the tempest, I got great praise and laud from all reflecting people; and it is not now to be told what a consolation was brought to many a sorrowful widow and orphan's heart, by the patience and temperance with which the fund of liberality was distributed; yet because a small sum was reserved to help some of the more helpless at another time, and the same was put out to interest in the town's books, there were not wanting evil-minded persons who went about whispering calumnious innuendos to my disadvantage; but I know, by this time, the nature of the world, and how impossible it is to reason with such a seven-headed and ten-horned beast as the multitude. So I said nothing; only I got the town-clerk's young man, who acted as clerk to the committee of the subscription, to make out a fair account of the distribution of the money, and to what intent the residue had been placed in the town-treasurer's hands; and this I sent unto a friend in Glasgow to get printed for me, the which he did; and when I got the copies, I directed one to every individual subscriber, and sent the town-drummer an end's errand with them, which was altogether a proceeding of a method and exactness so by common, that it not only quenched the envy of spite utterly out, but contributed more and more to give me weight and authority with the community, until I had the whole sway and mastery of the town.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THE PUBLIC LAMPS.

DEATH is a great reformer of corporate bodies, and we found, now and then, the benefit of his helping hand in our royal burgh. From the time of my being chosen into the council; and, indeed, for some years before, Mr Hirple had been a member, but, from some secret and unexpressed understanding among us, he was never made a bailie; for he was not liked; having none of that furthy and jocose spirit so becoming in a magistrate of that degree, and to which the gifts of gravity and formality make but an unsubstantial substitute. He was, on the contrary, a queer and quistical man, of a small stature of body, with an outshot breast, the which, I am inclined to think, was one of the main causes of our never promoting him into the ostensible magistracy; besides, his temper was exceedingly brittle; and in the debates anent the weightiest concerns of the public, he was apt to puff and fiz, and go off with a pluff of anger like a pioye; so that, for the space of more than five-and-twenty years, we would have been glad of his resignation; and, in the heat of argument, there was no lack of hints to that effect from more than one of his friends, especially from Bailie Picken, who was himself a sharp-tempered individual, and could as ill sit quiet under a contradiction as any man I ever was conjunct with. But just before the close of my second provostry, Providence was kind to Mr Hirple, and removed him gently away from the cares, and troubles, and the vain policy of this contending world, into, as I hope and trust, a far better place.

It may seem, hereafter, to the unlearned readers among posterity, particularly to such of them as may happen not to be versed in that state of things which we were obligated to endure, very strange that I should make this special mention of Mr Hirple at his latter end, seeing and observing the small store and account I have thus set upon his talents and personalities. But the verity of the reason is plainly this: we never discovered his worth and value till we had lost him, or rather, till we found

the defect and gap that his death caused, and the affliction that came in through it upon us in the ill-advised selection of Mr Hickery to fill his vacant place.

The spunky nature of Mr Hirple was certainly very disagreeable often to most of the council, especially when there was any difference of opinion; but then it was only a sort of flash, and at the vote he always, like a reasonable man, sided with the majority, and never after attempted to rip up a decision when it was once so settled. Mr Hickery was just the even down reverse of this. He never, to be sure, ran himself into a passion, but then he continued to speak and argue so long in reply, never heeding the most rational things of his adversaries, that he was sure to put every other person in a rage; in addition to all which, he was likewise a sorrowful body in never being able to understand how a determination by vote ought to and did put an end to every questionable proceeding; so that he was, for a constancy, ever harping about the last subject discussed, as if it had not been decided, until a new difference of opinion arose, and necessitated him to change the burden and o'ercome of his wearysome speeches.

It may seem remarkable that we should have taken such a plague into the council, and be thought that we were well served for our folly; but we were unacquaint with the character of the man—for although a native of the town, he was in truth a stranger, having, at an early age, espoused his fortune, and gone to Philadelphia in America; and no doubt his argol-bargolous disposition was an inheritance accumulated with his other conquest of wealth from the mannerless Yankees. Coming home and settling among us, with a power of money, (some said eleven thousand pounds,) a short time before Mr Hirple departed this life, we all thought, on that event happening, it would be a very proper compliment to take Mr Hickery into the council, and accordingly we were so misfortunate as to do so; but I trow we soon had reason to repent our indiscretion, and none more than myself, who had first proposed him.

Mr Hickery having been chosen to supply the void caused by the death of Mr Hirple, in the very first sederunt of the council after his election, he kithed in his true colours.

Among other things that I had contemplated for the ornament and edification of the burgh, was the placing up of lamps to light the streets, such as may be seen in all well regulated cities and towns of any degree. Having spoken of this patriotic project to several of my colleagues, who all highly approved of the same, I had no jealousy or suspicion that a design so clearly and luminously useful would meet with any other opposition than, may be, some doubt as to the fiscal abilities of our income. To be sure Mr Dribbles, who at that time kept the head inns, and was in the council, said, with a wink, that it might be found an inconvenience to sober folk that happened, on an occasion now and then, to be an hour later than usual among their friends, either at his house or any other, to be shown by the lamps to the profane populace as they were making the best of their way home; and Mr Dippings, the candlemaker, with less public spirit than might have been expected from one who made such a penny by the illuminations on news of victory, was of opinion that lamps would only encourage the commonality to keep late hours; and that the gentry were in no need of any thing of the sort, having their own handsome glass lanterns, with two candles in them, garnished and adorned with clippit paper; an equipage which he prophesied would soon wear out of fashion when lamps were once introduced, and the which prediction I have lived to see verified; for certainly, now-a-days, except when some elderly widow lady, or maiden gentlewoman, wanting the help and protection of man, happens to be out at her tea and supper, a tight and snod serving lassie, with a three-cornered glass lantern, is never seen on the causey. But, to return from this digression; saving and excepting the remarks of Mr Dribbles and Mr Dippings, and neither of them could be considered as made in a sincere frame of mind, I had no foretaste of any opposition. I was, therefore, but ill prepared for the worrying argument with which Mr Hickery seized upon the scheme, asserting and maintaining, among other apparatus-like reasoning, that in such a northern climate as that of Scotland, and where the twilight was of such long duration, it would be a profligate waste of the public money to employ it on any thing so little required as lamps were in our streets.

He had come home from America in the summer time, and I reminded him, that it certainly could never be the intention of the magistrates to light the lamps all the year round; but that in winter there was a great need of them; for in our northern climate the days were then very short, as he would soon experience, and might probably recollect. But never, surely, was such an endless man created. For, upon this, he immediately rejoined, that the streets would be much more effectually lighted, than by all the lamps I proposed to put up, were the inhabitants ordered to sit with their window-shutters open. I really did not know what answer to make to such a proposal, but I saw it would never do to argue with him; so I held my tongue quietly, and as soon as possible, on a pretence of private business, left the meeting, not a little mortified to find such a contrary spirit had got in among us.

After that meeting of the council, I went cannily round to all the other members, and represented to them, one by one, how proper it was that the lamps should be set up, both for a credit to the town, and as a conformity to the fashion of the age in every other place. And I took occasion to descant, at some length, on the untractable nature of Mr Hickery, and how it would be proper before the next meeting to agree to say nothing when the matter was again brought on the carpet, but just to come to the vote at once. Accordingly this was done, but it made no difference to Mr Hickery; on the contrary, he said, in a vehement manner, that he was sure there must be some corrupt understanding among us, otherwise a matter of such importance could not have been decided by a silent vote; and at every session of the council, till some new matter of difference cast up, he continued cuckooing about the lamp-job, as he called it, till he had sickened every body out of all patience.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PLAINSTONES.

THE first question that changed the bark of Mr Hickery, was my proposal for the side plainstones of the high street. In the new paving of the crown of the causey, some years before, the rise in the middle had been levelled to an equality with the side loans, and in disposing of the lamp-posts, it was thought advantageous to place them halfway from the houses and the syvers, between the loans and the crown of the causey, which had the effect at night, of making the people who were wont, in their travels and visitations, to keep the middle of the street, to diverge into the space and path between the lamp-posts and the houses. This, especially in wet weather, was attended with some disadvantages; for the pavement, close to the houses, was not well laid, and there being then no ronns to the houses, at every other place, particularly where the nepus-gables were towards the streets, the rain came gushing in a spout, like as if the windows of heaven were opened. And, in consequence, it began to be freely conversed, that there would be a great comfort in having the sides of the streets paved with flags, like the plainstones of Glasgow, and that an obligation should be laid on the landlords, to put up ronns to kepp the rain, and to conduct the water down in pipes by the sides of the houses;—all which furnished Mr Hickery with fresh topics for his fasherie about the lamps, and was, as he said, proof and demonstration of that most impolitic, corrupt, and short-sighted job, the consequences of which would reach, in the shape of some new tax, every ramification of society;—with divers other American argumentatives to the same effect. However, in process of time, by a judicious handling, and the help of an advantageous free gras-sum, which we got for some of the town lands from Mr Shuttle-thrift the manufacturer, who was desirous to build a villa-house, we got the flagstone part of the project accomplished, and the landlords gradually, of their own free-will, put up the ronns, by which the town has been greatly improved and convenienced.

But new occasions call for new laws; the side pavement, concentrating the people, required to be kept cleaner, and in better order, than when the whole width of the street was in use; so that the magistrates were constrained to make regulations concerning the same, and to enact fines and penalties against those who neglected to scrape and wash the plainstones forenent their houses, and to denounce, in the strictest terms, the emptying of improper utensils on the same; and this, until the people had grown into the habitude of attending to the rules, gave rise to many pleas, and contentious appeals and bickerings, before the magistrates. Among others summoned before me for default, was one Mrs Fenton, commonly called the Tappit-hen, who kept a small change-house, not of the best repute, being frequented by young men, of a station of life that gave her heart and countenance to be bardy, even to the bailies. It happened that, by some inattention, she had, one frosty morning, neglected to soop her flags, and old Miss Peggy Dainty being early afoot, in passing her door committed a false step, by treading on a bit of a lemon's skin, and her heels flying up, down she fell on her back, at full length, with a great cloyt. Mrs Fenton, hearing the accident, came running to the door, and seeing the exposure that perjink Miss Peggy had made of herself, put her hands to her sides, and laughed for some time as if she was by herself. Miss Peggy, being sorely hurt in the hinder parts, summoned Mrs Fenton before me, where the whole affair, both as to what was seen and heard, was so described, with name and surname, that I could not keep my composure. It was, however, made manifest, that Mrs Fenton had offended the law, in so much, as her flags had not been swept that morning; and therefore, to appease the offended delicacy of Miss Peggy, who was a most respectable lady in single life, I fined the delinquent five shillings.

"Mr Pawkie," said the latheron, "I'll no pay't. Whar do ye expeck a widow woman like me can get five shillings for ony sic nonsense?"

"Ye must not speak in that manner, honest woman," was my reply; "but just pay the-fine."

"In deed and truth, Mr Pawkie," quo' she, "it's ill getting a

breck off a highlandman. I'll pay no sic thing—five shillings—that's a story!"

I thought I would have been constrained to send her to prison, the woman grew so bold and contumacious, when Mr Hickery came in, and hearing what was going forward, was evidently working himself up to take the randy's part; but fortunately she had a suspicion that all the town-council and magistrates were in league against her, on account of the repute of her house, so that when he enquired of her where she lived, with a view, as I suspect, of interceding, she turned to him, and with a leer and a laugh, said, "Dear me, Mr Hickery, I'm sure ye hae nae need to speer that!"

The insinuation set up his birses; but she bamboozled him with her banter, and raised such a laugh against him, that he was fairly driven from the council-room, and I was myself obliged to let her go, without exacting the fine.

Who would have thought that this affair was to prove to me the means of an easy riddance of Mr Hickery? But so it turned out; for whether or not there was any foundation for the traffickings with him which she pretended, he never could abide to hear the story alluded to, which, when I discerned, I took care, whenever he showed any sort of inclination to molest the council with his propugnacity, to joke him about his bonny sweetheart, "the Tappit-hen," and he instantly sang dumb, and quietly slipped away; by which it may be seen how curiously events come to pass, since, out of the very first cause of his thwarting me in the lamps, I found, in process of time, a way of silencing him far better than any sort of truth or reason.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SECOND CROP OF VOLUNTEERS.

I HAVE already related, at full length, many of the particulars antecedent the electing of the first set of volunteers; the which, by being

germinated partly under the old system of public intromission, was done with more management and slight of art than the second. This, however, I will ever maintain, was not owing to any greater spirit of corruption; but only and solely to following the ancient dexterous ways, that had been, in a manner, engrained with the very nature of every thing pertaining to the representation of government as it existed, not merely in burgh towns, but wheresoever the crown and ministers found it expedient to have their lion's paw.

Matters were brought to a bearing differently, when, in the second edition of the late war, it was thought necessary to call on the people to resist the rampageous ambition of Bonaparte, then champing and trampling for the rich pastures of our national commonwealth. Accordingly, I kept myself aloof from all handling in the pecuniaries of the business; but I lent a friendly countenance to every feasible project that was likely to strengthen the confidence of the king in the loyalty and bravery of his people. For by this time I had learnt, that there was a wakerife common sense abroad among the opinions of men; and that the secret of the new way of ruling the world was to follow, not to control, the evident dictates of the popular voice; and I soon had reason to felicitate myself on this prudent and seasonable discovery. For it won me great reverence among the forward young men, who started up at the call of their country; and their demeanour towards me was as tokens and arles, from the rising generation, of being continued in respect and authority by them. Some of my colleagues, who are as well not named, by making themselves over busy, got but small thank for their pains. I was even preferred to the provost, as the medium of communicating the sentiments of the volunteering lads to the lord-lieutenant; and their cause did not suffer in my hands, for his lordship had long been in the habit of considering me as one of the discreetest men in the burgh; and although he returned very civil answers to all letters, he wrote to me in the cordial erudition of an old friend—a thing which the volunteers soon discerned, and respected me accordingly.

But the soldiering zeal being spontaneous among all ranks, and breaking forth into a blaze without any pre-ordered method,

some of the magistrates were disconcerted, and wist not what to do. I'll no take it upon me to say that they were altogether guided by a desire to have a finger in the pie, either in the shape of the honours of command or the profits of contract. This, however, is certain, that they either felt or feigned a great alarm and consternation at seeing such a vast military power in civil hands, over which they had no natural control ; and, as was said, independent of the crown and parliament. Another thing there could be no doubt of : in the frame of this fear they remonstrated with the government, and counselled the ministers to throw a wet blanket on the ardour of the volunteering, which, it is well known, was very readily done ; for the ministers, on seeing such a pressing forward to join the banners of the kingdom, had a dread and regard to the old leaven of Jacobinism, and put a limitation on the number of the armed men that were to be allowed to rise in every place—a most ill-advised prudence, as was made manifest by what happened among us, of which I will now rehearse the particulars, and the part I had in it myself.

As soon as it was understood among the commonality that the French were determined to subdue and make a conquest of Britain, as they had done of all the rest of Europe, holding the noses of every continental king and potentate to the grindstone, there was a prodigious stir and motion in all the hearts and pulses of Scotland, and no where in a more vehement degree than in Gudetown. But, for some reason or another which I could never dive into the bottom of, there was a slackness or backwardness on the part of government in sending instructions to the magistrates to step forward ; in so much that the people grew terrified that they would be conquered, without having even an opportunity to defend, as their fathers did of old, the hallowed things of their native land ; and, under the sense of this alarm, they knotted themselves together, and actually drew out proposals and resolutions of service of their own accord ; by which means they kept the power of choosing their officers in their own hands, and so gave many of the big-wigs of the town a tacit intimation that they were not likely to have the command.

While things were in this process, the government had come to its senses; and some steps and measures were taken to organize volunteer corps throughout the nation. Taking heart from them, other corps were proposed on the part of the gentry, in which they were themselves to have the command; and seeing that the numbers were to be limited, they had a wish and interest to keep back the real volunteer offers, and to get their own accepted in their stead. A suspicion of this sort getting vent, an outcry of discontent thereat arose against them; and to the consternation of the magistrates, the young lads, who had at the first come so briskly forward, called a meeting of their body, and, requesting the magistrates to be present, demanded to know what steps had been taken with their offer of service; and, if transmitted to government, what answer had been received.

This was a new era in public affairs; and no little amazement and anger was expressed by some of the town-council, that any set of persons should dare to question and interfere with the magistrates. But I saw it would never do to take the bull by the horns in that manner at such a time; so I commenced with Bailie Sprose, my lord being at the time provost, and earnestly beseeched him to attend the meeting with me, and to give a mild answer to any questions that might be put; and this was the more necessary, as there was some good reason to believe, that, in point of fact, the offer of service had been kept back.

We accordingly went to the meeting, where Mr Sprose, at my suggestion, stated, that we had received no answer; and that we could not explain how the delay had arisen. This, however, did not pacify the volunteers; but they appointed certain of their own number, a committee, to attend to the business, and to communicate with the secretary of state direct; intimating, that the members of the committee were those whom they intended to elect for their officers. This was a decisive step, and took the business entirely out of the hands of the magistrates; so, after the meeting, both Mr Sprose and myself agreed, that no time should be lost in communicating to the lord-lieutenant what had taken place.

Our letter, and the volunteers' letter, went by the same post;

and on receiving ours, the lord-lieutenant had immediately some conference with the secretary of state, who, falling into the views of his lordship, in preferring the offers of the corps proposed by the gentry, sent the volunteers word in reply, that their services, on the terms they had proposed, which were of the least possible expense to government, could not be accepted.

It was hoped that this answer would have ended the matter; but there were certain propugnacious spirits in the volunteers' committee; and they urged and persuaded the others to come into resolutions, to the effect that, having made early offers of service, on terms less objectionable in every point than those of many offers subsequently made and accepted, unless their offer was accepted, they would consider themselves as having the authority of his majesty's government to believe and to represent, that there was, in truth, no reason to apprehend that the enemy meditated any invasion; and these resolutions they sent off to London forthwith, before the magistrates had time to hear or to remonstrate against the use of such novel language from our burgh to his majesty's ministers.

We, however, heard something; and I wrote my lord, to inform him that the volunteers had renewed their offer, (for so we understood their representation was;) and he, from what he had heard before from the secretary of state, not expecting the effect it would have, answered me, that their offer could not be accepted. But to our astonishment, by the same post, the volunteers found themselves accepted, and the gentlemen they recommended for their officers gazetted; the which, as I tell frankly, was an admonition to me, that the peremptory will of authority was no longer sufficient for the rule of mankind; and, therefore, I squared my after conduct more by a deference to public opinion, than by any laid down maxims and principles of my own; the consequence of which was, that my influence still continued to grow and gather strength in the community, and I was enabled to accomplish many things that my predecessors would have thought it was almost beyond the compass of man to undertake.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CAPTAIN ARMOUR.

IN the course of these notandums, I have, here and there, touched on divers matters that did not actually pertain to my own magisterial life, further than as showing the temper and spirit in which different things were brought to a bearing; and, in the same way, I will now again step aside from the regular course of public affairs, to record an occurrence which, at the time, excited no small wonderment and sympathy, and in which it was confessed by many that I performed a very judicious part. The event here spoken of, was the quartering in the town, after the removal of that well-behaved regiment, the Argyle fencibles, the main part of another, the name and number of which I do not now recollect; but it was an English corps, and, like the other troops of that nation, was not then brought into the sobriety of discipline to which the whole British army has since been reduced, by the paternal perseverance of his Royal Highness the Duke of York; so that, after the douce and respectful Highlanders, we sorely felt the consequences of the outstropolous and galravitching Englishers, who thought it no disgrace to fill themselves as fou as pipers, and fight in the streets, and march to the church on the Lord's day with their band of music. However, after the first Sunday, upon a remonstrance on the immorality of such irreligious bravery, Colonel Cavendish, the commandant, silenced the musicians.

Among the officers, there was one Captain Armour, an extraordinary well demeaned, handsome man, who was very shy of accepting any civility from the town gentry, and kept himself aloof from all our ploys and entertainments, in such a manner, that the rest of the officers talked of him, marvelling at the cause, for it was not his wont in other places.

One Sabbath, during the remembering prayer, Mr Pittle put up a few words for criminals under sentence of death, there being two at the time in the Ayr jail, at the which petition I happened to look at Captain Armour, who, with the lave of the

officers, were within the magistrates' loft, and I thought he had, at the moment, a likeness to poor Jeanie Gaisling, that was executed for the murder of her bastard bairn.

This notion at the time disturbed me very much, and one thought after another so came into my head, that I could pay no attention to Mr Pittle, who certainly was but a cauldrie preacher, and never more so than on that day. In short, I was haunted with the fancy, that Captain Armour was no other than the misfortunate lassie's poor brother, who had in so pathetic a manner attended her and the magistrates to the scaffold; and, what was very strange, I was not the only one in the kirk who thought the same thing; for the resemblance, while Mr Pittle was praying, had been observed my many; and it was the subject of discourse in my shop on the Monday following, when the whole history of that most sorrowful concern was again brought to mind. But, without dwelling at large on the particularities, I need only mention, that it began to be publicly jealousd that he was indeed the identical lad, which moved every body; for he was a very good and gallant officer, having risen by his own merits, and was likewise much beloved in the regiment. Nevertheless, though his sister's sin was no fault of his, and could not impair the worth of his well-earned character, yet some of the thoughtless young ensigns began to draw off from him, and he was visited, in a manner, with the disgrace of an excommunication.

Being, however, a sensible man, he bore it for a while patiently, may be hoping that the suspicion would wear away; but my lord, with all his retinue, coming from London to the castle for the summer, invited the officers one day to dine with him and the countess, when the fact was established by a very simple accident.

Captain Armour, in going up the stairs, and along the crooked old passages of the castle, happened to notice that the colonel, who was in the van, turned to the wrong hand, and called to him to take the other way, which circumstance convinced all present that he was domestically familiar with the labyrinths of the building; and the consequence was, that, during dinner, not one of the officers spoke to him, some from embarrassment and others from pride.

The earl perceiving their demeanour, enquired of the colonel, when they had returned from the table to the drawing-room, as to the cause of such a visible alienation, and Colonel Cavendish, who was much of the gentleman, explaining it, expressing his grief that so unpleasant a discovery had been made to the prejudice of so worthy a man, my lord was observed to stand some time in a thoughtful posture, after which he went and spoke in a whisper to the countess, who advised him, as her ladyship in the sequel told me herself, to send for me, as a wary and prudent man. Accordingly a servant was secretly dispatched express to the town on that errand; my lord and my lady insisting on the officers staying to spend the evening with them, which was an unusual civility at the *pro forma* dinners at the castle.

When I arrived, the earl took me into his private library, and we had some serious conversation about the captain's sister; and, when I had related the circumstantialities of her end to him, he sent for the captain, and with great tenderness, and a manner most kind and gracious, told him what he had noticed in the conduct of the officers, offering his mediation to appease any difference, if it was a thing that could be done.

While my lord was speaking, the captain preserved a steady and unmoved countenance: no one could have imagined that he was listening to any thing but some grave generality of discourse; but when the earl offered to mediate, his breast swelled, and his face grew like his coat, and I saw his eyes fill with water as he turned round, to hide the grief that could not be stifled. The passion of shame, however, lasted but for a moment. In less time than I am in writing these heads, he was again himself, and with a modest fortitude that was exceedingly comely, he acknowledged who he was, adding, that he feared his blameless disgrace entailed effects which he could not hope to remove, and therefore it was his intention to resign his commission. The earl, however, requested that he would do nothing rashly, and that he should first allow him to try what could be done to convince his brother officers that it was unworthy of them to act towards him in the way they did. His lordship then led us to the drawing-room, on entering which, he said aloud to the countess, in a manner that could not be misunder-

stood, "In Captain Armour I have discovered an old acquaintance, who by his own merits, and under circumstances that would have sunk any man less conscious of his own purity and worth, has raised himself, from having once been my servant, to a rank that makes me happy to receive him as my guest."

I need not add, that this benevolence of his lordship was followed with a most bountiful alteration towards the captain from all present, in so much that, before the regiment was removed from the town, we had the satisfaction of seeing him at divers of the town-ploys, where he received every civility.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE TRADES' BALL.

AT the conclusion of my second provostry, or rather, as I think, after it was over, an accident happened in the town that might have led to no little trouble and contention but for the way and manner that I managed the same. My friend and neighbour, Mr Kilsyth, an ettling man, who had been wonderful prosperous in the spirit line, having been taken on for a bailie, by virtue of some able handling on the part of Deacon Kenitweel, proposed and propounded, that there should be a ball and supper for the trades; and to testify his sense of the honour that he owed to all the crafts, especially the wrights, whereof Mr Kenitweel was then deacon, he promised to send in both wine, rum, and brandy, from his cellar, for the company. I did not much approve of the project, for divers reasons; the principal of which was, because my daughters were grown into young ladies, and I was, thank God, in a circumstance to entitle them to hold their heads something above the trades. However, I could not positively refuse my compliance, especially as Mrs Pawkie was requested by Bailie Kilsyth, and those who took an active part in furtherance of the ploy, to be the lady directress of the occasion. And, out of an honour and homage to myself, I was likewise entreated

to preside at the head of the table, over the supper that was to ensue after the dancing.

In its own nature, there was surely nothing of an objectionable principle, in a "trades' ball;" but we had several young men of the gentle sort about the town, blythe and rattling lads, who were welcome both to high and low, and to whom the project seemed worthy of a ridicule. It would, as I said at the time, have been just as well to have made it really a trades' ball, without any adulteration of the gentry; but the hempies alluded to jouked themselves in upon us, and obligated the managers to invite them; and an ill return they made for this discretion and civility, as I have to relate.

On the night set for the occasion, the company met in the assembly-room, in the New-inns, where we had bespoke a light genteel supper, and had M'Lachlan, the fiddler, over from Ayr, for the purpose. Nothing could be better while the dancing lasted; the whole concern wore an appearance of the greatest genteelity. But when supper was announced, and the company adjourned to partake of it, judge of the universal consternation that was visible in every countenance, when, instead of the light tarts, and nice jellies and sillybobs that were expected, we beheld a long table, with a row down the middle of rounds of beef, large cold veal-pies on pewter plates like tea-trays, cold boiled turkeys, and beef and bacon hams, and, for ornament in the middle, a perfect stack of celery.

The instant I entered the supper-room, I saw there had been a plot: poor Bailie Kilsyth, who had all the night been in triumph and glory, was for a season speechless; and when at last he came to himself, he was like to have been the death of the landlord on the spot; while I could remark, with the tail of my eye, that secret looks of a queer satisfaction were exchanged among the beaux before mentioned. This observe, when I made it, led me to go up to the bailie as he was storming at the bribed and corrupt innkeeper, and to say to him, that if he would leave the matter to me, I would settle it to the content of all present; which he, slackening the grip he had taken of the landlord by the throat, instantly conceded. Whereupon, I went back to the head of the table, and said aloud, "that the cold

collection had been provided by some secret friends, and although it was not just what the directors could have wished, yet it would be as well to bring to mind the old proverb, which instructs us no to be particular about the mouth of a gi'en horse." But I added, "before partaking thereof, we'll hae in our bill frae the landlord, and settle it,"—and it was called accordingly. I could discern, that this was a turn that the conspirators did not look for. It, however, put the company a thought into spirits, and they made the best o't. But, while they were busy at the table, I took a canny opportunity of saying, under the rose to one of the gentlemen, "that I saw through the joke, and could relish it just as well as the plotters; but as the thing was so plainly felt as an insult by the generality of the company, the less that was said about it the better; and that if the whole bill, including the cost of Bailie Kilsyth's wine and spirits, was defrayed, I would make no enquiries, and the authors might never be known. This admonishment was not lost, for by-and-by, I saw the gentleman confabbing together; and the next morning, through the post, I received a twenty-pound note in a nameless letter, requesting the amount of it to be placed against the expense of the ball. I was overly well satisfied with this to say a great deal of what I thought, but I took a quiet step to the bank, where, expressing some doubt of the goodness of the note, I was informed it was perfectly good, and had been that very day issued from the bank to one of the gentlemen, whom, even at this day, it would not be prudent to expose to danger by naming.

Upon a consultation with the other gentlemen, who had the management of the ball, it was agreed, that we should say nothing of the gift of twenty pounds, but distribute it in the winter to needful families, which was done; for we feared that the authors of the derision would be found out, and that ill-blood might be bred in the town.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BAILIE'S HEAD.

BUT although in the main I was considered by the events and transactions already rehearsed, a prudent and sagacious man, yet I was not free from the consequences of envy. To be sure, they were not manifested in any very intolerant spirit, and in so far they caused me rather molestation of mind than actual suffering; but still they kithed in evil, and thereby marrèd the full satisfactory fruition of my labours and devices. Among other of the outbreaks alluded to that not a little vexed me, was one that I will relate, and just in order here to show the animus of men's minds towards me.

We had in the town a clever lad, with a geni of a mechanical turn, who made bunch-bowls of leather, and legs for cripples of the same commodity, that were lighter and easier to wear than either legs of cork or timber. His name was Geordie Soople-joint, a modest, douce, and well-behaved young man—caring for little else but the perfecting of his art. I had heard of his talent, and was curious to converse with him; so I spoke to Bailie Pirlet, who had taken him by the hand, to bring him and his leather punch-bowl, and some of his curious legs and arms, to let me see them; the which the bailie did, and it happened that while they were with me, in came Mr Thomas M'Queerie, a dry neighbour at a joke.

After some generality of discourse concerning the inventions, whereon Bailie Pirlet, who was naturally a gabby prick-me-dainty body, enlarged at great length, with all his well docket words, as if they were on chandler's pins, pointing out here the utility of the legs to persons maimed in the wars of their country, and showing forth there in what manner the punch-bowls were specimens of a new art that might in time supplant both China and Staffordshire ware, and deducing therefrom the benefits that would come out of it to the country at large, and especially to the landed interest, in so much as the increased demand which it would cause for leather, would raise the value of hides,

and per consequence the price of black cattle—to all which Mr M'Queerie listened with a shrewd and a thirsty ear; and when the bailie had made an end of his paternoster, he proposed that I should make a filling of Geordie's bowl, to try if it did not leak.

"Indeed, Mr Pawkie," quo' he, "it will be a great credit to our town to hae had the merit o' producing sic a clever lad, who, as the bailie has in a manner demonstrated, is ordained to bring about an augmentation o' trade by his punch-bowls, little short of what has been done wi' the steam-engines. Geordie will be to us what James Watt is to the ettling town of Greenook, so we can do no less than drink prosperity to his endeavours."

I did not much like this bantering of Mr M'Queerie, for I saw it made Geordie's face grow red, and it was not what he had deserved; so to repress it, and to encourage the poor lad, I said, "Come, come, neighbour, none of your wipes—what Geordie has done, is but arles of what he may do."

"That's no to be debated," replied Mr M'Queerie, "for he has shown already that he can make very good legs and arms; and I'm sure I shouldna be surprised were he in time to make heads as good as a bailie's."

I never saw any mortal man look as that pernickity personage, the bailie, did at this joke, but I suppressed my own feelings; while the bailie, like a bantam cock in a passion, stotted out of his chair with the spunk of a birslet pea, demanding of Mr M'Queerie an explanation of what he meant by the insinuation. It was with great difficulty that I got him pacified; but unfortunately the joke was oure good to be forgotten, and when it was afterwards spread abroad, as it happened to take its birth in my house, it was laid to my charge, and many a time was I obligated to tell all about it, and how it couldna be meant for me, but had been incurred by Bailie Pirlet's conceit of spinning out long perjink speeches.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TOWN DRUMMER.

NOR did I get every thing my own way, for I was often thwarted in matters of small account, and suffered from them greater disturbance and molestation than things of such little moment ought to have been allowed to produce within me; and I do not think that any thing happened in the whole course of my public life, which gave me more vexation than what I felt in the last week of my second provostry.

For many a year, one Robin Boss had been town drummer; he was a relic of some American-war fencibles, and was, to say the God's truth of him, a divor body, with no manner of conduct, saving a very earnest endeavour to fill himself fou as often as he could get the means; the consequence of which was, that his face was as plooky as a curran' bun, and his nose as red as a partan's tae.

One afternoon there was a need to send out a proclamation to abolish a practice that was growing into a custom, in some of the bye parts of the town, of keeping swine at large—ordering them to be confined in proper styres, and other suitable places. As on all occasions when the matter to be proclaimed was from the magistrates, Thomas, on this, was attended by the town-officers in their Sunday garbs, and with their halberts in their hands; but the abominable and irreverent creature was so drunk, that he wamblet to and fro over the drum, as if there had not been a bane in his body. He was seemingly as soople and as senseless as a bolster.—Still, as this was no new thing with him, it might have passed; for James Hound, the senior officer, was in the practice, when Robin was in that state, of reading the proclamations himself.—On this occasion, however, James happened to be absent on some hue and cry quest, and another of the officers (I forget which) was appointed to perform for him. Robin, accustomed to James, no sooner heard the other man begin to read, than he began to curse and swear at him as an incapable wincompoop—an impertinent term that he was much addicted

to. The grammar school was at the time skailing, and the boys seeing the stramash, gathered round the officer, and yelling and shouting, encouraged Robin more and more into rebellion, till at last they worked up his corruption to such a pitch, that he took the drum from about his neck, and made it fly like a bombshell at the officer's head.

The officers behaved very well, for they dragged Robin by the lug and the horn to the tolbooth, and then came with their complaint to me. Seeing how the authorities had been set at nought, and the necessity there was of making an example, I forthwith ordered Robin to be cashiered from the service of the town; and as so important a concern as a proclamation ought not to be delayed, I likewise, upon the spot, ordered the officers to take a lad that had been also a drummer in a marching regiment, and go with him to make the proclamation.

Nothing could be done in a more earnest and zealous public spirit than this was done by me. But habit had begot in the town a partiality for the drunken ne'er-do-well, Robin; and this just act of mine was immediately condemned as a daring stretch of arbitrary power; and the consequence was, that when the council met next day, some sharp words flew among us, as to my usurping an undue authority; and the thank I got for my pains was the mortification to see the worthless body restored to full power and dignity, with no other reward than an admonition to behave better for the future. Now, I leave it to the unbiassed judgment of posterity to determine if any public man could be more ungraciously treated by his colleagues than I was on this occasion. But, verily, the council had their reward.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AN ALARM.

THE divor, Robin Boss, being, as I have recorded, reinstated in office, soon began to play his old tricks. In the course of

the week after the Michaelmas term at which my second provostry ended, he was so insupportably drunk that he fell head foremost into his drum, which cost the town five-and-twenty shillings for a new one—an accident that was not without some satisfaction to me; and I trow I was not sparing in my derisive commendations on the worth of such a public officer. Nevertheless, he was still kept on, some befriending him for compassion, and others as it were to spite me.

But Robin's good behaviour did not end with breaking the drum, and costing a new one.—In the course of the winter it was his custom to beat, "Go to bed, Tom," about ten o'clock at night, and the *réveille* at five in the morning.—In one of his drunken fits he made a mistake, and instead of going his rounds as usual at ten o'clock, he had fallen asleep in a change house, and waking about the midnight hour in the terror of some whisky dream, he seized his drum, and running into the streets, began to strike the fire-beat in the most awful manner.

It was a fine clear frosty moonlight, and the hollow sound of the drum resounded through the silent streets like thunder.—In a moment every body was a-foot, and the cry of "Whar is't? whar's the fire?" was heard echoing from all sides.—Robin, quite unconscious that he alone was the cause of the alarm, still went along beating the dreadful summons. I heard the noise and rose; but while I was drawing on my stockings, in the chair at the bed-head, and telling Mrs Pawkie to compose herself, for our houses were all insured, I suddenly recollected that Robin had the night before neglected to go his rounds at ten o'clock as usual, and the thought came into my head that the alarm might be one of his inebriated mistakes; so, instead of dressing myself any further, I went to the window, and looked out through the glass, without opening it, for, being in my night clothes, I was afraid of taking cold.

The street was as throng as on a market day, and every face in the moonlight was pale with fear.—Men and lads were running with their coats, and carrying their breeches in their hands; wives and maidens were all asking questions at one another, and even lasses were fleeing to and fro, like water nymphs with urns, having stoups and pails in their hands.—There was swearing

and tearing of men, hoarse with the rage of impatience, at the tolbooth, getting out the fire-engine from its stance under the stair; and loud and terrible afar off, and over all, came the peal of alarm from drunken Robin's drum.

I could scarcely keep my composure when I beheld and heard all this, for I was soon thoroughly persuaded of the fact. At last I saw Deacon Girdwood, the chief advocate and champion of Robin, passing down the causey like a demented man, with a red nightcap, and his big-coat on—for some had cried that the fire was in his yard.—“Deacon,” cried I, opening the window, forgetting in the jocularity of the moment the risk I ran from being so naked, “whar away sae fast, deacon?”

The deacon stopped and said, “Is't out? is't out?”

“Gang your ways home,” quo' I very coolly, “for I hae a notion that a' this hobleshaw's but the fume of a gill in your friend Robin's head.”

“It's no possible!” exclaimed the deacon.

“Possible here or possible there, Mr Girdwood,” quo' I, “it's our cauld for me to stand talking wi' you here; we'll learn the rights o't in the morning; so, good-night;” and with that I pulled down the window. But scarcely had I done so, when a shout of laughter came gathering up the street, and soon after poor drunken Robin was brought along by the cuff of the neck, between two of the town-officers, one of them carrying his drum. The next day he was put out of office for ever, and folk recollecting in what manner I had acted towards him before, the outcry about my arbitrary power was forgotten in the blame that was heaped upon those who had espoused Robin's cause against me.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE COUNTRY GENTRY.

For a long period of time, I had observed that there was a gradual mixing in of the country gentry among the town's folks.

This was partly to be ascribed to a necessity rising out of the French Revolution, whereby men of substance thought it an expedient policy to relax in their ancient maxims of family pride and consequence; and partly to the great increase and growth of wealth which the influx of trade caused throughout the kingdom, whereby the merchants were enabled to vie and ostentate even with the better sort of lairds. The effect of this, however, was less protuberant in our town than in many others which I might well name, and the cause thereof lay mainly in our being more given to deal in the small way; not that we lacked of traders possessed both of purse and perseverance; but we did not exactly lie in the thoroughfare of those mighty masses of foreign commodities, the throughgoing of which left, to use the words of the old proverb, "goud in goupins" with all who had the handling of the same. Nevertheless, we came in for our share of the condescensions of the country gentry; and although there was nothing like a melting down of them among us, either by marrying or giving in marriage, there was a communion that gave us some insight, no overly to their advantage, as to the extent and measure of their capacities and talents. In short, we discovered that they were vessels made of ordinary human clay; so that, instead of our reverence for them being augmented by a freer intercourse, we thought less and less of them, until, poor bodies, the bit prideful lairdies were just looked down upon by our gawsie big-bellied burgesses, not a few of whom had heritable bonds on their estates. But in this I am speaking of the change when it had come to a full head; for in verity it must be allowed that when the country gentry, with their families, began to intromit among us, we could not make enough of them. Indeed, we were deaved about the affability of old crabbit Bodle of Bodletonbrae, and his sister, Miss Jenny, when they favoured us with their company at the first inspection ball. I'll ne'er forgot that occasion; for being then in my second provostry, I had, in course of nature, been appointed a deputy lord-lieutenant, and the town-council entertaining the inspecting officers, and the officers of the volunteers, it fell as a duty incumbent on me to be the director of the ball afterwards, and to the which I sent an invitation to the laird and his sister, little hoping or expecting they would

come. But the laird, likewise being a deputy lord-lieutenant, he accepted the invitation, and came with his sister in all the state of pedigree in their power. Such a prodigy of old-fashioned grandeur as Miss Jenny was!—but neither shop nor mantua-maker of our day and generation had been the better o't. She was just, as some of the young lasses said, like Clarissa Harlowe, in the cuts and copperplates of Mrs Rickerton's set of the book, and an older and more curious set than Mrs Rickerton's was not in the whole town; indeed, for that matter, I believe it was the only one among us, and it had edified, as Mr Binder the bookseller used to say, at least three successive generations of young ladies, for he had himself given it twice new covers. We had, however, not then any circulating library. But for all her antiquity and lappets, it is not to be supposed what respect and deference Miss Jenny and her brother, the laird, received—nor the small praise that came to my share, for having had the spirit to invite them. The ball was spoken of as the genteelest in the memory of man, although to my certain knowledge, on account of the volunteers, some were there that never thought to mess or mell in the same chamber with Bodletonbrae and his sister, Miss Jenny.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TESTS OF SUCCESS.

INTENDING these notations for the instruction of posterity, it would not be altogether becoming of me to speak of the domestic effects which many of the things that I have herein jotted down had in my own family. I feel myself, however, constrained in spirit to lift aside a small bit of the private curtain, just to show how Mrs Pawkie comported herself in the progressive vicissitudes of our prosperity, in the act and doing of which I do not wish to throw any slight on her feminine qualities; for, to speak of her as she deserves at my hand, she has been a most excellent

wife, and a decent woman, and had aye a ruth and ready hand for the needful. Still, to say the truth, she is not without a few little weaknesses like her neighbours, and the ill-less vanity of being thought far ben with the great is among others of her harmless frailties.

Soon after the inspection ball before spoken of, she said to me that it would be a great benefit and advantage to our family if we could get Bodletonbrae and his sister, and some of the other country gentry, to dine with us. I was not very clear about how the benefit was to come to book, for the outlay I thought as likely to o'ergang the profit; at the same time, not wishing to baulk Mrs Pawkie of a ploy on which I saw her mind was bent, I gave my consent to her and my daughters to send out the cards, and make the necessary preparations. But herein I should not take credit to myself for more of the virtue of humility than was my due; therefore I open the door of my secret heart so far aje, as to let the reader discern that I was content to hear our invitations were all accepted.

Of the specialities and dainties of the banquet prepared, it is not fitting that I should treat in any more particular manner, than to say they were the best that could be had, and that our guests were all mightily well pleased. Indeed, my wife was out of the body with exultation when Mrs Auchans of that ilk begged that she would let her have a copy of the directions she had followed in making a flummery, which the whole company declared was most excellent. This compliment was the more pleasant, as Lady Auchans was well known for her skill in savoury contrivances, and to have any thing new to her of the sort was a triumph beyond our most sanguine expectations. In a word, from that day we found that we had taken, as it were, a step above the common in the town. There were, no doubt, some who envied our good fortune; but, upon the whole, the community at large were pleased to see the consideration in which their chief magistrate was held. It reflected down, as it were, upon themselves a glaik of the sunshine that shone upon us; and although it may be a light thing, as it is seemingly a vain one, to me to say, I am now pretty much of Mrs Pawkie's opinion, that our cultivation of an intercourse with the country

gentry was, in the end, a benefit to our family, in so far as it obtained, both for my sons and daughters, a degree of countenance that otherwise could hardly have been expected from their connexions and fortune, even though I had been twice provost.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

RETRIBUTION.

BUT a sad accident shortly after happened, which had the effect of making it as little pleasant to me to vex Mr Hickery with a joke about the Tappit-hen, as it was to him. Widow Fenton, as I have soberly hinted; for it is not a subject to be openly spoken of, had many ill-assorted and irregular characters among her customers; and a gang of playactors coming to the town, and getting leave to perform in Mr Dribble's barn, batches of the young lads, both gentle and semple, when the play was over, used to adjourn to her house for pies and porter, the commodities in which she chiefly dealt. One night, when the deep tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots was the play, there was a great concourse of people at "The Theatre Royal," and the consequence was, that the Tappit-hen's house, both but and ben, was, at the conclusion, filled to overflowing.

The actress that played Queen Elizabeth, was a little-worth termagant woman, and, in addition to other laxities of conduct, was addicted to the immorality of taking more than did her good, and when in her cups, she would rant and ring fiercer than old Queen Elizabeth ever could do herself. Queen Mary's part was done by a bonny genty young lady, that was said to have run away from a boarding-school, and, by all accounts, she acted wonderful well. But she too was not altogether without a flaw, so that there was a division in the town between their admirers and visiters; some maintaining, as I was told, that Mrs Beaufort, if she would keep herself sober, was not only a finer woman, but more of a lady, and a better actress, than Miss

Scarborough, while others considered her as a vulgar regimental virago.

The play of Mary Queen of Scots, causing a great congregation of the rival partizans of the two ladies to meet in the Tap-pit-hen's public, some contention took place about the merits of their respective favourites, and, from less to more, hands were raised, and blows given, and the trades'-lads, being as hot in their differences as the gentlemen, a dreadful riot ensued. Gill-stoups, porter bottles, and penny pies flew like balls and bomb-shells in battle. Mrs Fenton, with her mutch off, and her hair loose, with wide and wild arms, like a witch in a whirlwind, was seen trying to sunder the challengers, and the champions. Finding, however, her endeavours unavailing, and fearing that murder would be committed, she ran like desperation into the streets, crying for help. I was just at the time stepping into my bed, when I heard the uproar, and, dressing myself again, I went out to the street; for the sound and din of the riot came raging through the silence of the midnight, like the tearing and swearing of the multitude at a house on fire, and I thought no less an accident could be the cause.

On going into the street, I met several persons running to the scene of action, and, among others, Mrs Beaufort, with a gallant of her own, and both of them no in their sober senses. It's no for me to say who he was; but assuredly, had the woman no been doited with drink, she never would have seen any likeness between him and me, for he was more than twenty years my junior. However, onward we all ran to Mrs Fenton's house, where the riot, like a raging caldron boiling o'er, had overflowed into the street.

The moment I reached the door, I ran forward with my stick raised, but not with any design of striking man, woman, or child, when a ramplor devil, the young laird of Swinton, who was one of the most outstrapolous rakes about the town, wrenched it out of my grip, and would have, I dare say, made no scruple of doing me some dreadful bodily harm, when suddenly I found myself pulled out of the crowd by a powerful-handed woman, who cried, "Come, my love; love, come:" and who was this but that scarlet strumpet, Mrs Beaufort, who having lost her

gallant in the crowd, and being, as I think, blind fou, had taken me for him, insisting before all present that I was her dear friend, and that she would die for me—with other siclike fantastical and randy ranting, which no queen in a tragedy could by any possibility surpass. At first I was confounded and overtaken, and could not speak; and the worst of all was, that, in a moment, the mob seemed to forget their quarrel, and to turn in derision on me. What might have ensued it would not be easy to say; but just at this very critical juncture, and while the drunken latheron was casting herself into antic shapes of distress, and flourishing with her hands and arms to the heavens at my imputed cruelty, two of the town-officers came up, which gave me courage to act a decisive part; so I gave over to them Mrs Beaufort, with all her airs, and, going myself to the guard-house, brought a file of soldiers, and so quelled the riot. But from that night I thought it prudent to eschew every allusion to Mrs Fenton, and tacitly to forgive even Swinton for the treatment I had received from him, by seeming as if I had not noticed him, although I had singled him out by name.

Mrs Pawkie, on hearing what I had suffered from Mrs Beaufort, was very zealous that I should punish her to the utmost rigour of the law, even to drumming her out of the town; but forbearance was my best policy, so I only persuaded my colleagues to order the players to decamp, and to give the Tappit-hen notice, that it would be expedient for the future sale of her pies and porter, at untimeous hours, and that she should flit her howff from our town. Indeed, what pleasure would it have been to me to have dealt unmercifully, either towards the one or the other? for surely the gentle way of keeping up a proper respect for magistrates, and others in authority, should ever be preferred; especially, as in cases like this, where there had been no premeditated wrong. And I say this with the greater sincerity; for in my secret conscience, when I think of the affair at this distance of time, I am pricked not a little in reflecting how I had previously crowed and triumphed over poor Mr Hickery, in the matter of his mortification at the time of Miss Peggy Dainty's false step.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE DUEL.

HERETOFORE all my magisterial undertakings and concerns had thriven in a very satisfactory manner. I was, to be sure, now and then, as I have narrated, subjected to opposition, and squibs, and a jeer; and envious and spiteful persons were not wanting in the world to call in question my intents and motives, representing my best endeavours for the public good as but a right-handed method to secure my own interests. It would be a vain thing of me to deny, that, at the beginning of my career, I was misled by the wily examples of the past times, who thought that, in taking on them to serve the community, they had a privilege to see that they were full-handed for what benefit they might do the public; but as I gathered experience, and saw the rising of the sharp-sighted spirit that is now abroad among the affairs of men, I clearly discerned that it would be more for the advantage of me and mine to act with a conformity thereto, than to seek, by any similar wiles or devices, an immediate and sicker advantage. I may therefore say, without a boast, that the two or three years before my third provostry were as renowned and comfortable to myself, upon the whole, as any reasonable man could look for. We cannot, however, expect a full cup and measure of the sweets of life, without some adulteration of the sour and bitter; and it was my lot and fate to prove an experience of this truth, in a sudden and unaccountable falling off from all moral decorum in the person of my brother's only son, Richard, a lad that was a promise of great ability in his youth.

He was just between the tyning and the winning, as the saying is, when the playactors, before spoken off, came to the town, being then in his eighteenth year. Naturally of a light-hearted and funny disposition, and possessing a jocose turn for mimicry, he was a great favourite among his companions, and getting in with the players, it seems drew up with that little-worth, demure daffodil, Miss Scarborough, through the instrumentality of

whose condisciples and the randy Mrs Beaufort, that riot at Widow Fenton's began, which ended in expurgating the town of the whole gang, bag and baggage. Some there were, I shall here mention, who said that the expulsion of the players was owing to what I had heard anent the intromission of my nephew; but, in verity, I had not the least spunk or spark of suspicion of what was going on between him and the miss, till one night, some time after, Richard and the young laird of Swinton, with others of their comrades, forgathered, and came to high words on the subject, the two being rivals, or rather, as was said, equally in esteem and favour with the lady.

Young Swinton was, to say the truth of him, a fine bold rattling lad, warm in the temper, and ready with the hand, and no man's foe so much as his own; for he was a spoiled bairn, through the partiality of old Lady Bodikins, his grandmother, who lived in the turreted house at the town-end, by whose indulgence he grew to be of a dressy and rakish inclination, and, like most youngsters of the kind, was vain of his shames, the which cost Mr Pittle's session no little trouble. But—not to dwell on his faults—my nephew and he quarrelled, and nothing less would serve them than to fight a duel, which they did with pistols next morning; and Richard received from the laird's first shot a bullet in the left arm, that disabled him in that member for life. He was left for dead on the green where they fought—Swinton and the two seconds making, as was supposed, their escape.

When Richard was found faint and bleeding by Tammy Tout, the town-herd, as he drove out the cows in the morning, the hobleshow is not to be described; and my brother came to me, and insisted that I should give him a warrant to apprehend all concerned. I was grieved for my brother, and very much distressed to think of what had happened to blithe Dicky, as I was wont to call my nephew when he was a laddie, and I would fain have gratified the spirit of revenge in myself; but I brought to mind his roving and wanton pranks, and I counselled his father first to abide the upshot of the wound, representing to him, in the best manner I could, that it was but the quarrel of

young men, and that maybe his son was as muckle in fault as Swinton.

My brother was, however, of a hasty temper, and upbraided me with my slackness, on account, as he tauntingly insinuated, of the young laird being one of my best customers, which was a harsh and unrighteous doing; but it was not the severest trial which the accident occasioned to me; for the same night, at a late hour, a line was brought to me by a lassie, requesting I would come to a certain place—and when I went there, who was it from but Swinton and the two other young lads that had been the seconds at the duel.

“Bailie,” said the laird on behalf of himself and friends, “though you are the uncle of poor Dick, we have resolved to throw ourselves into your hands, for we have not provided any money to enable us to flee the country; we only hope you will not deal overly harshly with us till his fate is ascertained.”

I was greatly disconcerted, and wist not what to say; for knowing the rigour of our Scottish laws against duelling, I was wae to see three brave youths, not yet come to years of discretion, standing in the peril and jeopardy of an ignominious end, and that, too, for an injury done to my own kin; and then I thought of my nephew and of my brother, that, maybe, would soon be in sorrow for the loss of his only son. In short, I was tried almost beyond my humanity. The three poor lads, seeing me hesitate, were much moved, and one of them (Sandy Blackie) said, “I told you how it would be; it was even-down madness to throw ourselves into the lion’s mouth.” To this Swinton replied, “Mr Pawkie, we have cast ourselves on your mercy as a gentleman.”

What could I say to this, but that I hoped they would find me one; and without speaking any more at that time—for indeed I could not, my heart beat so fast—I bade them follow me, and taking them round by the back road to my garden yett, I let them in, and conveyed them into a warehouse where I kept my bales and boxes. Then slipping into the house, I took out of the pantry a basket of bread and a cold leg of mutton, which, when Mrs Pawkie and the servant lassies missed in the morning, they could not divine what had become of; and giving the same

to them, with a bottle of wine—for they were very hungry, having tasted nothing all day—I went round to my brother's to see at the latest how Richard was. But such a stang as I got on entering the house, when I heard his mother wailing that he was dead, he having fainted away in getting the bullet extracted; and when I saw his father coming out of the room like a demented man, and heard again his upbraiding of me for having refused a warrant to apprehend the murderers—I was so stunned with the shock, and with the thought of the poor young lads in my mercy, that I could with difficulty support myself along the passage into a room where there was a chair, into which I fell rather than threw myself. I had not, however, been long seated, when a joyful cry announced that Richard was recovering, and presently he was in a manner free from pain; and the doctor assured me the wound was probably not mortal. I did not, however, linger long on hearing this; but hastening home, I took what money I had in my scrutoire, and going to the malefactors, said, “Lads, take thir twa three pounds, and quit the town as fast as ye can, for Richard is my nephew, and blood, ye ken, is thicker than water, and I may be tempted to give you up.”

They started on their legs, and shaking me in a warm manner by both the hands, they hurried away without speaking, nor could I say more, as I opened the back yett to let them out, than bid them take tent of themselves.

Mrs Pawkie was in a great consternation at my late absence, and when I went home she thought I was ill, I was so pale and flurried, and she wanted to send for the doctor, but I told her that when I was calmed, I would be better; however, I got no sleep that night. In the morning I went to see Richard, whom I found in a composed and rational state: he confessed to his father that he was as muckle to blame as Swinton, and begged and entreated us, if he should die, not to take any steps against the fugitives: my brother, however, was loth to make rash promises, and it was not till his son was out of danger that I had any ease of mind for the part I had played. But when Richard was afterwards well enough to go about, and the duellers had come out of their hidings, they told him what I had done, by which the whole affair came to the public, and I got great fame

thereby, none being more proud to speak of it than poor Dick himself, who, from that time, became the bosom friend of Swinton; in so much that, when he was out of his time as a writer, and had gone through his courses at Edinburgh, the laird made him his man of business, and, in a manner, gave him a nest egg.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AN INTERLOCUTOR.

UPON a consideration of many things, it appears to me very strange, that almost the whole tot of our improvements became, in a manner, the parents of new plagues and troubles to the magistrates. It might reasonably have been thought that the lamps in the streets would have been a terror to evil-doers, and the plainstone side-pavements paths of pleasantness to them that do well; but, so far from this being the case, the very reverse was the consequence. The servant lasses went freely out (on their errands) at night, and at late hours, for their mistresses, without the protection of lanterns, by which they were enabled to gallop in a way that never could have before happened: for lanterns are kenspeckle commodities, and of course a check on every kind of gavaulling. Thus, out of the lamps sprung no little irregularity in the conduct of servants, and much bitterness of spirit on that account to mistresses, especially to those who were of a particular turn, and who did not choose that their maidens should spend their hours a-field, when they could be profitably employed at home.

Of the plagues that were from the plainstones, I have given an exemplary specimen in the plea between old perjink Miss Peggy Dainty, and the widow Fenton, that was commonly called the Tappit-hen. For the present, I shall therefore confine myself in this *nota bene* to an accident that happened to Mrs Girdwood, the deacon of the coopers' wife—a most managing, industrious, and indefatigable woman, that allowed no grass to grow in her path.

Mrs Girdwood had fee'd one Jeanie Tirlet, and soon after she came home, the mistress had her big summer washing at the public washing-house on the green—all the best of her sheets and napery—both what had been used in the course of the winter, and what was only washed to keep clear in the colour, were in the boyne. It was one of the greatest doings of the kind that the mistress had in the whole course of the year, and the value of things intrusted to Jeanie's care was not to be told, at least so said Mrs Girdwood herself.

Jeanie and Marion Sapples, the washerwoman, with a pickle tea and sugar tied in the corners of a napkin, and two measured glasses of whisky in an old doctor's bottle, had been sent with the foul clothes the night before to the washing-house, and by break of day they were up and at their work; nothing particular, as Marion said, was observed about Jeanie till after they had taken their breakfast, when, in spreading out the clothes on the green, some of the ne'er-do-weel young clerks of the town were seen gaffawing and haverelling with Jeanie, the consequence of which was, that all the rest of the day she was light-headed; indeed, as Mrs Girdwood told me herself, when Jeanie came in from the green for Marion's dinner, she couldna help remarking to her goodman, that there was something fey about the lassie, or, to use her own words, there was a storm in her tail, light where it might. But little did she think it was to bring the dule it did to her.

Jeanie having gotten the pig with the wonted allowance of broth and beef in it for Marion, returned to the green, and while Marion was eating the same, she disappeared. Once away, aye away; hilt or hair of Jeanie was not seen that night. Honest Marion Sapples worked like a Trojan to the gloaming, but the light latheron never came back; at last, seeing no other help for it, she got one of the other women at the washing-house to go to Mrs Girdwood and to let her know what had happened, and how the best part of the washing would, unless help was sent, be obliged to lie out all night.

The deacon's wife well knew the great stake she had on that occasion in the boyne, and was for a season demented with the thought; but at last summoning her three daughters, and bor-

rowing our lass, and Mr Smeddum the tobacconist's niece, she went to the green, and got every thing safely housed, yet still Jeanie Tirlet never made her appearance.

Mrs Girdwood and her daughters having returned home, in a most uneasy state of mind on the lassie's account, the deacon himself came over to me, to consult what he ought to do as the head of a family. But I advised him to wait till Jeanie cast up, which was the next morning. Where she had been, and who she was with, could never be delved out of her; but the deacon brought her to the clerk's chamber, before Bailie Kittlewit, who was that day acting magistrate, and he sentenced her to be dismissed from her servitude with no more than the wage she had actually earned. The lassie was conscious of the ill turn she had played, and would have submitted in modesty; but one of the writers' clerks, an impudent whipper-snapper, that had more to say with her than I need to say, bade her protest and appeal against the interlocutor, which the daring gipsy, so egged on, actually did, and the appeal next court day came before me. Whereupon, I, knowing the outs and ins of the case, decerned that she should be fined five shillings to the poor of the parish, and ordained to go back to Mrs Girdwood's, and there stay out the term of her servitude, or failing by refusal so to do, to be sent to prison, and put to hard labour for the remainder of the term.

Every body present, on hearing the circumstances, thought this a most judicious and lenient sentence; but so thought not the other servant lasses of the town; for in the evening, as I was going home, thinking no harm, on passing the Cross-well, where a vast congregation of them were assembled with their stoups discoursing the news of the day, they opened on me like a pack of hounds at a tod, and I verily believed they would have mobbed me had I not made the best of my way home. My wife had been at the window when the hobleshow began, and was just like to die of diversion at seeing me so set upon by the tinklers; and when I entered the dining-room she said, "Really, Mr Pawkie, ye're a gallant man, to be so weel in the good graces of the ladies." But although I have often since had many a good laugh at the sport, I was not overly pleased with Mrs Pawkie

at the time—particularly as the matter between the deacon's wife and Jeanie did not end with my interlocutor. For the latheron's friend in the court having discovered that I had not decerned she was to do any work to Mrs Girdwood, but only to stay out her term, advised her to do nothing when she went back but go to her bed, which she was bardy enough to do, until my poor friend, the deacon, in order to get a quiet rid-dance of her, was glad to pay her full fee, and board wages for the remainder of her time. This was the same Jeanie Tirlet that was transported for some misdemeanour, after making both Glasgow and Edinburgh owre het to hold her.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE NEWSPAPER.

SHORTLY after the foregoing tribulation, of which I cannot take it upon me to say that I got so well rid as of many other vexations of a more grievous nature, there arose a thing in the town that caused to me much deep concern, and very serious reflection. I had been, from the beginning, a true government man, as all loyal subjects ought in duty to be; for I never indeed could well understand how it would advantage, either the king or his ministers, to injure and do detriment to the lieges; on the contrary, I always saw and thought that his majesty, and those of his cabinet, had as great an interest in the prosperity and well-doing of the people, as it was possible for a landlord to have in the thriving of his tenantry. Accordingly, giving on all occasions, and at all times and seasons, even when the policy of the kingdom was overcast with a cloud, the king and government, in church and state, credit for the best intentions, however humble their capacity in performance might seem in those straits and difficulties, which, from time to time, dumfounded the wisest in power and authority, I was exceedingly troubled to hear that a newspaper was to be set up in the burgh, and that,

too, by hands not altogether clean of the coom of jacobinical democracy.

The person that first brought me an account of this, and it was in a private confidential manner, was Mr Scudmyloof, the grammar schoolmaster, a man of method and lear, to whom the fathers of the project had applied for an occasional cast of his skill, in the way of Latin head-pieces, and essays of erudition concerning the free spirit among the ancient Greeks and Romans; but he, not liking the principle of the men concerned in the scheme, thought that it would be a public service to the community at large, if a stop could be put, by my help, to the opening of such an ettering sore and king's evil as a newspaper, in our heretofore and hitherto truly royal and loyal burgh; especially as it was given out that the calamity, for I can call it no less, was to be conducted on liberal principles, meaning, of course, in the most afflicting and vexatious manner towards his majesty's ministers.

"What ye say," said I to Mr Scudmyloof when he told me the news, "is very alarming, very much so indeed; but as there is no law yet actually and peremptorily prohibiting the sending forth of newspapers, I doubt it will not be in my power to interfere."

He was of the same opinion; and we both agreed it was a rank exuberance of liberty, that the commonality should be exposed to the risk of being inoculated with anarchy and confusion, from what he, in his learned manner, judiciously called the predilections of amateur pretension. The parties engaged in the project being Mr Absolom the writer—a man no overly reverential in his opinion of the law and lords when his clients lost their pleas, which, poor folk, was very often—and some three or four young and inexperienced lads, that were wont to read essays, and debate the kittle points of divinity and other hidden knowledge, in the Cross-Keys monthly, denying the existence of the soul of man, as Dr Sinney told me, till they were deprived of all rationality by foreign or British spirits. In short, I was perplexed when I heard of the design, not knowing what to do, or what might be expected from me by government in a case of such emergency as the setting up of a newspaper so

declaredly adverse to every species of vested trust and power; for it was easy to foresee that those immediately on the scene would be the first opposed to the onset and brunt of the battle. Never can any public man have a more delicate task imposed upon him, than to steer clear of offence in such a predicament. After a full consideration of the business, Mr Scudmyloof declared that he would retire from the field, and stand aloof; and he rehearsed a fine passage in the Greek language on that head, pat to the occasion, but which I did not very thoroughly understand, being no deacon in the dead languages, as I told him at the time.

But when the dominie had left me, I considered with myself, and having long before then observed that our hopes, when realized, are always light in the grain, and our fears, when come to pass, less than they seemed as seen through the mists of time and distance, I resolved with myself to sit still with my eyes open, watching and saying nothing; and it was well that I deported myself so prudently; for when the first number of the paper made its appearance, it was as poor a job as ever was "open to all parties, and influenced by none;" and it required but two eyes to discern that there was no need of any strong power from the lord advocate to suppress or abolish the undertaking; for there was neither birr nor smeddum enough in it to molest the high or to pleasure the low; so being left to itself, and not ennobled by any prosecution, as the schemers expected, it became as foisonless as the "London Gazette" on ordinary occasions. Those behind the curtain, who thought to bounce out with a grand stot and strut before the world, finding that even I used it as a convenient vehicle to advertise my houses when need was, and which I did by the way of a canny seduction of policy, joking civilly with Mr Absolom anent his paper trumpet, as I called it, they were utterly vanquished by seeing themselves of so little account in the world, and forsook the thing altogether; by which means it was gradually transformed into a very solid and decent supporter of the government—Mr Absolom, for his pains, being invited to all our public dinners, of which he gave a full account, to the great satisfaction of all who were present, but more particularly to those

who were not, especially the wives and ladies of the town, to whom it was a great pleasure to see the names of their kith and kin in print. And indeed, to do Mr Absolom justice, he was certainly at great pains to set off every thing to the best advantage, and usually put speeches to some of our names which showed that, in the way of grammaticals, he was even able to have mended some of the parliamentary clishmaclavers, of which the Londoners, with all their skill in the craft, are so seldom able to lick into any shape of common sense.

Thus, by a judicious forbearance in the first instance, and a canny wising towards the undertaking in the second, did I, in the third, help to convert this dangerous political adversary into a very respectable instrument of governmental influence and efficacy.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SCHOOL-HOUSE SCHEME.



THE spirit of opposition that kithed towards me in the affair of Robin Boss, the drummer, was but an instance and symptom of the new nature then growing up in public matters. I was not long done with my second provosty, when I had occasion to congratulate myself on having passed twice through the dignity with so much respect; for, at the Michaelmas term, we had chosen Mr Robert Plan into the vacancy caused by the death of that easy man, Mr Weezle, which happened a short time before. I know not what came over me, that Mr Plan was allowed to be chosen, for I never could abide him; being, as he was, a great stickler for small particularities, more zealous than discreet, and ever more intent to carry his own point, than to consider the good that might flow from a more urbane spirit. Not that the man was devoid of ability—few, indeed, could set forth a more plausible tale; but he was continually meddling, keeking, and poking, and always taking up a suspicious opinion of every body's intents and motives but his own. He was,

besides, of a retired and sedentary habit of body ; and the vapour of his stomach, as he was sitting by himself, often mounted into his upper story, and begat, with his over zealous and meddling imagination, many unsound and fantastical notions. For all that, however, it must be acknowledged that Mr Plan was a sincere honest man, only he sometimes lacked the discernment of the right from the wrong ; and the consequence was, that, when in error, he was even more obstinate than when in the right ; for his jealousy of human nature made him interpret falsely the heat with which his own headstrong zeal, when in error, was ever very properly resisted.

In nothing, however, did his molesting temper cause so much disturbance, as when, in the year 1809, the bigging of the new school-house was under consideration. There was, about that time, a great sough throughout the country on the subject of education, and it was a fashion to call schools academies ; and out of a delusion rising from the use of that term, to think it necessary to decry the good plain old places, wherein so many had learnt those things by which they helped to make the country and kingdom what it is, and to scheme for the ways and means to raise more edificial structures and receptacles. None was more infected with this distemperature than Mr Plan ; and accordingly, when he came to the council-chamber, on the day that the matter of the new school-house was to be discussed, he brought with him a fine castle in the air, which he pressed hard upon us ; representing, that if we laid out two or three thousand pounds more than we intended, and built a beautiful academy and got a rector thereto, with a liberal salary, and other suitable masters, opulent people at a distance—yea, gentlemen in the East and West Indies—would send their children to be educated among us, by which, great fame and profit would redound to the town.

Nothing could be more plausibly set forth ; and certainly the project, as a notion, had many things to recommend it ; but we had no funds adequate to undertake it ; so, on the score of expense, knowing, as I did, the state of the public income, I thought it my duty to oppose it *in toto* ; which fired Mr Plan to such a degree, that he immediately insinuated that I had some

end of my own to serve in objecting to his scheme; and because the wall that it was proposed to big round the moderate building which we were contemplating, would inclose a portion of the backside of my new steading at the Westergate, he made no scruple of speaking, in a circumbendibus manner, as to the particular reasons that I might have for preferring it to his design, which he roused, in his way, as more worthy of the state of the arts and the taste of the age.

It was not easy to sit still under his imputations; especially as I could plainly see that some of the other members of the council leant towards his way of thinking. Nor will I deny that, in preferring the more moderate design, I had a contemplation of my own advantage in the matter of the dyke; for I do not think it any shame to a public man to serve his own interests by those of the community, when he can righteously do so.

It was a thing never questionable, that the school-house required the inclosure of a wall, and the outside of that wall was of a natural necessity constrained to be a wing of inclosure to the ground beyond. Therefore, I see not how a corrupt motive ought to have been imputed to me, merely because I had a piece of ground that marched with the spot whereon it was intended to construct the new building; which spot, I should remark, belonged to the town before I bought mine. However, Mr Plan so worked upon this material, that, what with one thing and what with another, he got the council persuaded to give up the moderate plan, and to consent to sell the ground where it had been proposed to build the new school, and to apply the proceeds towards the means of erecting a fine academy on the Green.

It was not easy to thole to be so thwarted, especially for such an extravagant problem, by one so new to our councils and deliberations. I never was more fashed in my life; for having hitherto, in all my plans for the improvement of the town, not only succeeded, but given satisfaction, I was vexed to see the council run away with such a speculative vagary. No doubt, the popular fantasy anent education and academies, had quite as muckle to do in the matter as Mr Plan's fozey rhetoric, but what availed that to me, at seeing a reasonable undertaking

reviled and set aside, and grievous debts about to be laid on the community for a bubble as unsubstantial as that of the Ayr Bank. Besides, it was giving the upper hand in the council to Mr Plan, to which, as a new man, he had no right. I said but little, for I saw it would be of no use; I, however, took a canny opportunity of remarking to old Mr Dinledoup, the English teacher, that this castle-building scheme of an academy would cause great changes probably in the masters; and as, no doubt, it would oblige us to adopt the new methods of teaching, I would like to have a private inkling of what salary he would expect on being superannuated.

The worthy man was hale and hearty, not exceeding three score and seven, and had never dreamt of being superannuated. He was, besides, a prideful body, and, like all of his calling, thought not a little of himself. The surprise, therefore, with which he heard me was just wonderful. For a space of time he stood still and uttered nothing; then he took his snuff-box out of the flap pocket of his waistcoat, where he usually carried it, and, giving three distinct and very comical raps, drew his mouth into a purse. "Mr Pawkie," at last he said; "Mr Pawkie, there will be news in the world before I consent to be superannuated."

This was what I expected, and I replied, "Then, why do not you and Mr Scudmyloof, of the grammar school, represent to the magistrates that the present school-house may, with a small repair, serve for many years." And so I sowed an effectual seed of opposition to Mr Plan, in a quarter he never dreamt of; for the two dominies, in the dread of undergoing some transmogrification, laid their heads together, and went round among the parents of the children, and decried the academy project, and the cess that the cost of it would bring upon the town; by which a public opinion was begotten and brought to a bearing, that the magistrates could not resist; so the old school-house was repaired, and Mr Plan's scheme, as well as the other, given up. In this, it is true, if I had not the satisfaction to get a dyke to the backside of my property, I had the pleasure to know that my interloping adversary was disappointed; the which was a sort of compensation.

CHAPTER XLI.

BENEFITS OF NEUTRALITY.

THE general election in 1812 was a source of trouble and uneasiness to me; both because our district of burghs was to be contested, and because the contest was not between men of opposite principles, but of the same side. To neither of them had I any particular leaning; on the contrary, I would have preferred the old member, whom I had, on different occasions, found an accessible and tractable instrument, in the way of getting small favours with the government and India company, for friends that never failed to consider them as such things should be. But what could I do? Providence had placed me in the van of the battle, and I needs must fight; so thought every body, and so for a time I thought myself. Weighing, however, the matter one night soberly in my mind, and seeing that whichever of the two candidates was chosen, I, by my adherent loyalty to the cause for which they were both declared, the contest between them being a rivalry of purse and personality, would have as much to say with the one as with the other, came to the conclusion that it was my prudentest course not to intermeddle at all in the election. Accordingly, as soon as it was proper to make a declaration of my sentiments, I made this known, and it caused a great wonderment in the town; nobody could imagine it possible that I was sincere, many thinking there was something aneath it, which would kithe in time to the surprise of the public. However, the peutering went on, and I took no part. The two candidates were as civil and as liberal, the one after the other, to Mrs Pawkie and my daughters, as any gentlemen of a parliamentary understanding could be. Indeed, I verily believe, that although I had been really chosen delegate, as it was at one time intended I should be, I could not have hoped for half the profit that came in from the dubiety which my declaration of neutrality caused; for as often as I assured the one candidate that I did not intend even to be present at the choosing of the delegate, some rich present was sure

to be sent to my wife, of which the other no sooner heard than he was upsides with him. It was just a sport to think of me protesting my neutrality, and to see how little I was believed. For still the friends of the two candidates, like the figures of the four quarters of the world round Britannia in a picture, came about my wife, and poured into her lap a most extraordinary paraphernalia from the horn of their abundance.

The common talk of the town was, that surely I was bereft of my wonted discretion, to traffic so openly with corruption; and that it could not be doubted I would have to face the House of Commons, and suffer the worst pains and penalties of bribery. But what did all this signify to me, who was conscious of the truth and integrity of my motives and intents? "They say!—what say they?—let them say!"—was what I said, as often as any of my canny friends came to me, saying, "For God's sake, Mr Pawkie, tak' tent"—"I hope, Mr Pawkie, ye ken the ground ye stand on"—or, "I wish that some folks were aware of what's said about them." In short, I was both angered and diverted by their elishmaclavers; and having some need to go into Glasgow just on the eve of the election, I thought I would, for diversion, give them something in truth to play with; so saying nothing to my shop lad the night before, nor even to Mrs Pawkie, (for the best of women are given to tattling,) till we were in our beds, I went off early on the morning of the day appointed for choosing the delegate.

The consternation in the town at my evasion was wonderful. Nobody could fathom it; and the friends and supporters of the rival candidates looked, as I was told, at one another, in a state of suspicion that was just a curiosity to witness. Even when the delegate was chosen, every body thought that something would be found wanting, merely because I was not present. The new member himself, when his election was declared, did not feel quite easy; and more than once, when I saw him after my return from Glasgow, he said to me, in a particular manner—"But tell me now, bailie, what was the true reason of your visit to Glasgow?" And, in like manner, his opponent also hinted that he would petition against the return; but there were some facts which he could not well get at without my

assistance—insinuating that I might find my account in helping him.

At last, the true policy of the part I had played began to be understood ; and I got far more credit for the way in which I had turned both parties so well to my own advantage, than if I had been the means of deciding the election by my single vote.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE NEW MEMBER.

BUT the new member was, in some points, not of so tractable a nature as many of his predecessors had been ; and notwithstanding all the couthy jocosity and curry-favouring of his demeanour towards us before the election, he was no sooner returned, than he began, as it were, to snap his fingers in the very faces of those of the council to whom he was most indebted, which was a thing not of very easy endurance, considering how they had taxed their consciences in his behalf ; and this treatment was the more bitterly felt, as the old member had been, during the whole of his time, as considerate and obliging as could reasonably be expected ; doing any little job that needed his helping hand when it was in his power, and when it was not, replying to our letters in a most discreet and civil manner. To be sure, poor man, he had but little to say in the way of granting favours ; for being latterly inclined to a whiggish principle, he was, in consequence, debarred from all manner of government patronage, and had little in his gift but soft words and fair promises. Indeed, I have often remarked, in the course of my time, that there is a surprising difference, in regard to the urbanities in use among those who have not yet come to authority, or who have been cast down from it, and those who are in the full possession of the rule and domination of office ; but never was the thing plainer than in the conduct of the new member.

He was by nature and inclination one of the upsetting sort ; a kind of man who, in all manner of business, have a leaven of contrariness, that makes them very hard to deal with ; and he, being conjunct with his majesty's ministers at London, had imbibed and partook of that domineering spirit to which all men are ordained, to be given over whenever they are clothed in the garments of power. Many among us thought, by his colleaguings with the government, that we had got a great catch, and they were both blythe and vogie when he was chosen ; none doubting but he would do much good servitude to the corporation, and the interests of the burgh. However he soon gave a rebuff, that laid us all on our backs in a state of the greatest mortification. But although it behoved me to sink down with the rest, I was but little hurt : on the contrary, I had a good laugh in my sleeve at the time ; and afterwards, many a merry tumbler of toddy with my brethren, when they had recovered from their discomfiture. The story was this :—

About a fortnight after the election, Mr Scudmyloof, the schoolmaster, called one day on me, in my shop, and said, "That being of a nervous turn, the din of the school did not agree with him ; and that he would, therefore, be greatly obligated to me if I would get him made a gauger." There had been something in the carriage of our new member, before he left the town, that was not satisfactory to me, forbye my part at the election, the which made me loth to be the first to ask for any grace, though the master was a most respectable and decent man ; so I advised Mr Scudmyloof to apply to Provost Pickandab, who had been the delegate, as the person to whose instrumentality the member was most obliged ; and to whose application, he of course would pay the greatest attention.

Whether Provost Pickandab had made any observe similar to mine, I never could rightly understand, though I had a notion to that effect : he, however, instead of writing himself, made the application for Mr Scudmyloof an affair of the council ; recommending him as a worthy modest man, which he really was, and well qualified for the post. Off went this notable letter, and by return of post from London, we got our answer as we were all sitting in council, deliberating anent the rebuilding of the Cross-

well, which had been for some time in a sore state of dilapidation; and surely never was any letter more to the point and less to the purpose of an applicant. It was very short and pithy, just acknowledging receipt of ours; and adding thereto, "circumstances do not allow me to pay any attention to such applications." We all with one accord, in sympathy and instinct, threw ourselves back in our chairs at the words, looking at Provost Pickandab, with the pragmatistical epistle in his hand, sitting in his place at the head of the table, with the countenance of consternation.

When I came to myself, I began to consider that there must have been something no right in the provost's own letter on the subject, to cause such an uncourteous rebuff; so after condemning, in very strong terms, the member's most ungenteel style, in order to procure for myself a patient hearing, I warily proposed that the provost's application should be read, a copy thereof being kept, and I had soon a positive confirmation of my suspicion. For the provost, being fresh in the dignity of his office, and naturally of a prideful turn, had addressed the parliament man as if he was under an obligation to him; and as if the council had a right to command him to get the gauger's post, or indeed any other, for whomsoever they might apply. So, seeing whence the original sin of the affair had sprung, I said nothing; but the same night I wrote a humiliated letter from myself to the member, telling him how sorry we all were for the indiscretion that had been used towards him, and how much it would pleasure me to heal the breach that had happened between him and the burgh, with other words of an oily and conciliating policy.

The indignant member, by the time my letter reached hand, had cooled in his passion, and, I fancy, was glad of an occasion to do away the consequence of the rupture; for with a most extraordinary alacrity he procured Mr Scudmyloof the post, writing me, when he had done so, in the civilest manner, and saying many condescending things concerning his regard for me; all which ministered to maintain and uphold my repute and consideration in the town, as superior to that of the provost.

CHAPTER XLIII.

MY THIRD PROVOSTRY.

It was at the Michaelmas 1813 that I was chosen provost for the third time, and at the special request of my lord the earl, who, being in ill health, had been advised by the faculty of doctors in London to try the medicinal virtues of the air and climate of Sicily, in the Mediterranean sea; and there was an understanding on the occasion, that I should hold the post of honour for two years, chiefly in order to bring to a conclusion different works that the town had then in hand.

At the two former times when I was raised to the dignity, and indeed at all times when I received any advancement, I had enjoyed an elation of heart, and was, as I may say, crouse and vogie; but experience had worked a change upon my nature, and when I was saluted on my election with the customary greetings and gratulations of those present, I felt a solemnity enter into the frame of my thoughts, and I became as it were a new man on the spot. When I returned home to my own house, I retired into my private chamber for a time, to consult with myself in what manner my deportment should be regulated; for I was conscious that heretofore I had been overly governed with a disposition to do things my own way, and although not in an avaricious temper, yet something, I must confess, with a sort of sinister respect for my own interests. It may be, that standing now clear and free of the world, I had less incitement to be so grippy, and so was thought of me, I very well know; but in sobriety and truth I conscientiously affirm, and herein record, that I had lived to partake of the purer spirit which the great mutations of the age had conjured into public affairs, and I saw that there was a necessity to carry into all dealings with the concerns of the community, the same probity which helps a man to prosperity in the sequestered traffic of private life.

This serious and religious communing wrought within me to a benign and pleasant issue, and when I went back in the afternoon to dine with the corporation in the council-room, and

looked around me on the bailies, the councillors, and the deacons, I felt as if I was indeed elevated above them all, and that I had a task to perform, in which I could hope for but little sympathy from many; and the first thing I did was to measure, with a discreet hand, the festivity of the occasion.

At all former and precedent banquets, it had been the custom to give vent to muckle wanton and luxurious indulgence, and to galravitch, both at hack and manger, in a very expensive manner to the funds of the town. I therefore resolved to set my face against this for the future; and accordingly, when we had enjoyed a jocose temperance of loyalty and hilarity, with a decent measure of wine, I filled a glass, and requesting all present to do the same, without any preliminary reflections on the gavauiling of past times, I drank good afternoon to each severally, and then rose from the table, in a way that put an end to all the expectations of more drink.

But this conduct did not give satisfaction to some of the old hands, who had been for years in the habit and practice of looking forward to the provost's dinner as to a feast of fat things. Mr Peevie, one of the very sickerest of all the former sederunts, came to me next morning, in a remonstrating disposition, to enquire what had come over me, and to tell me that every body was much surprised, and many thought it not right of me to break in upon ancient and wonted customs in such a sudden and unconcerted manner.

This Mr Peevie was, in his person, a stumpy man, well advanced in years. He had been, in his origin, a bonnet-maker; but falling heir to a friend that left him a property, he retired from business about the fiftieth year of his age, doing nothing but walking about with an ivory-headed staff, in a suit of dark blue cloth with yellow buttons, wearing a large cocked hat, and a white three-tiered wig, which was well powdered every morning by Duncan Curl, the barber. The method of his discourse and conversation was very precise, and his words were all set forth in a style of consequence, that took with many for a season as the pith and marrow of solidity and sense. The body, however, was but a pompous trifle, and I had for many a day held his observes and admonishments in no very reverential

estimation. So that, when I heard him address me in such a memorializing manner, I was inclined and tempted to set him off with a flea in his lug. However, I was enabled to bridle and rein in this prejudicial humour, and answer him in his own way.

“Mr Peevie,” quo’ I, “you know that few in the town hae the repute that ye hae for a gift of sagacity by common, and therefore I’ll open my mind to you in this matter, with a frankness that would not be a judicious polity with folk of a lighter understanding.”

This was before the counter in my shop. I then walked in behind it, and drew the chair that stands in the corner nearer to the fire, for Mr Peevie. When he was seated thereon, and, as was his wont in conversation, had placed both his hands on the top of his staff, and leant his chin on the same, I subjoined,

“Mr Peevie, I need not tell to a man of your experience, that folk in public stations cannot always venture to lay before the world the reasons of their conduct on particular occasions; and therefore, when men who have been long in the station that I have filled in this town, are seen to step aside from what has been in time past, it is to be hoped that grave and sensible persons like you, Mr Peevie, will no rashly condemn them unheard; nevertheless, my good friend, I am very happy that ye have spoken to me anent the stinted allowance of wine and punch at the dinner, because the like thing from any other would have made me jealousy that the complaint was altogether owing to a disappointed appetite, which is a corrupt thing, that I am sure would never affect a man of such a public spirit as you are well known to be.”

Mr Peevie, at this, lifted his chin from off his hands, and dropping his arms down upon his knees, held his staff by the middle, as he replied, looking upward to me,

“What ye say, Provost Pawkie, has in it a solid commodity of judgment and sensibility; and ye may be sure that I was not without a cogitation of reflection, that there had been a discreet argument of economy at the bottom of the revolution which was brought to a criticism yesterday’s afternoon. Weel aware am I, that men in authority cannot appease and quell the inordinate

concupiscence of the multitude, and that in a' stations of life there are persons who would mumpileese the retinue of the king and government for their own behoof and eeteration, without any regard to the cause or effect of such manifest predilections. But ye do me no more than a judicature, in supposing that, in this matter, I am habituated wi' the best intentions. For I can assure you, Mr Pawkie, that no man in this community has a more literal respect for your character than I have, or is more disposed for a judicious example of continence in the way of public enterteenment than I have ever been; for, as you know, I am of a constipent principle towards every extravagant and costive outlay. Therefore, on my own account, I had a satisfaction at seeing the abridgement which you made of our former inebrieties; but there are other persons of a conjugal nature, who look upon such castrations as a deficiency of their rights, and the like of them will find fault with the best procedures."

"Very true, Mr Peevie," said I, "that's very true; but if his Majesty's government, in this war for all that is dear to us as men and Britons, wish us, who are in authority under them, to pare and save, in order that the means of bringing the war to a happy end may not be wasted, an example must be set, and that example, as a loyal subject and a magistrate, it's my intent so to give, in the hope and confidence of being backed by every person of a right way of thinking."

"It's no to be deputed, Provost Pawkie," replied my friend, somewhat puzzled by what I had said; "it's no to be deputed, that we live in a gigantic vortex, and that every man is bound to make an energetic dispensation for the good of his country; but I could not have thought that our means had come to sic an alteration and extremity, as that the reverent homage of the Michaelmas dinners could have been enacted, and declared absolute and abolished, by any interpolation less than the omnipotence of parliament."

"Not abolished, Mr Peevie," cried I, interrupting him; "that would indeed be a stretch of power. No, no; I hope we're both ordained to partake of many a Michaelmas dinner thegether yet; but with a meted measure of sobriety. For we neither live

in the auld time nor the golden age, and it would not do now for the like of you and me, Mr Peevie, to be seen in the dusk of the evening, toddling home from the town-hall wi' goggling een and havoring tongues, and one of the town-officers following at a distance in case of accidents; sic things ye ken, hae been, but nobody would plead for their continuance."

Mr Peevie did not relish this, for in truth it came near his own doors, it having been his annual practice for some years at the Michaelmas dinner to give a sixpence to James Hound, the officer, to see him safe home, and the very time before he had sat so long, that honest James was obligated to cleek and oexter him the whole way; and in the way home, the old man, cagie with what he had gotten, stood in the causey opposite to Mr M'Vest's door, then deacon of the taylors, and trying to snap his fingers, sang like a daft man,

"The sheets they were thin and the blankets were sma',
And the taylor fell through the bed, thimble and a'."

So that he was disconcerted by my innuendo, and shortly after left the shop, I trow, with small inclination to propagate any sedition against me, for the abbreviation I had made of the Michaelmas galravitching.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CHURCH VACANT.

I HAD long been sensible that, in getting Mr Pittle the kirk, I had acted with the levity and indiscretion of a young man; but at that time I understood not the nature of public trust, nor, indeed, did the community at large. Men in power then ruled more for their own ends than in these latter times; and use and wont sanctioned and sanctified many doings, from the days of our ancestors, that, but to imagine, will astonish and startle posterity. Accordingly, when Mr Pittle, after a lingering ill-

ness, was removed from us, which happened in the first year of my third provostry, I bethought me of the consequences which had ensued from his presentation, and resolved within myself to act a very different part in the filling up of the vacancy. With this intent, as soon as the breath was out of his body, I sent round for some of the most weighty and best considered of the councillors and elders, and told them that a great trust was, by the death of the minister, placed in our hands, and that, in these times, we ought to do what in us lay to get a shepherd that would gather back to the establishment the flock which had been scattered among the seceders, by the feckless crook and ill-guiding of their former pastor.

They all agreed with me in this, and named one eminent divine after another; but the majority of voices were in favour of Dr Whackdeil of Kirkbogle, a man of weight and example, both in and out the pulpit, so that it was resolved to give the call to him, which was done accordingly.

It however came out that the Kirkbogle stipend was better than ours, and the consequence was, that having given the call, it became necessary to make up the deficiency; for it was not reasonable to expect that the reverend doctor, with his small family of nine children, would remove to us at a loss. How to accomplish this was a work of some difficulty, for the town revenues were all eaten up with one thing and another; but upon an examination of the income, arising from what had been levied on the seats for the repair of the church, it was discovered that, by doing away a sinking fund, which had been set apart to redeem the debt incurred for the same, and by the town taking the debt on itself, we could make up a sufficiency to bring the doctor among us. And in so far as having an orthodox preacher, and a very excellent man for our minister, there was great cause to be satisfied with that arrangement.

But the payment of the interest on the public debt, with which the town was burdened, began soon after to press heavily on us, and we were obligated to take on more borrowed money, in order to keep our credit, and likewise to devise ways and means, in the shape of public improvements, to raise an income to make up what was required. This led me to suggest the building of

the new bridge, the cost of which, by contract, there was no reason to complain of, and the toll thereon, while the war lasted, not only paid the interest of the borrowed money by which it was built, but left a good penny in the nook of the treasurer's box for other purposes.

Had the war continued, and the nation to prosper thereby as it did, nobody can doubt that a great source of wealth and income was opened to the town; but when peace came round, and our prosperity began to fall off, the traffic on the bridge grew less and less, insomuch that the toll, as I now understand, (for since my resignation, I meddle not with public concerns,) does not yield enough to pay the five per cent on the prime cost of the bridge, by which my successors suffer much molestation in raising the needful money to do the same. However, every body continues well satisfied with Dr Whackdeil, who was the original cause of this perplexity; and it is to be hoped that, in time, things will grow better, and the revenues come round again to indemnify the town for its present tribulation.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE STRAMASH IN THE COUNCIL.

As I have said, my third provostry was undertaken in a spirit of sincerity, different in some degree from that of the two former; but strange and singular as it may seem, I really think I got less credit for the purity of my intents, than I did even in the first. During the whole term from the election in the year 1813 to the Michaelmas following, I verily believe that no one proposal which I made to the council was construed in a right sense; this was partly owing to the repute I had acquired for canny management, but chiefly to the perverse views and misconceptions of that Yankee thorn-in-the-side, Mr Hickery, who never desisted from setting himself against every thing that sprang from me, and as often found some show of plausibility to

maintain his argumentations. And yet, for all that, he was a man held in no esteem or respect in the town; for he had wearied every body out by his everlasting contradictions. Mr Plan was likewise a source of great tribulation to me; for he was ever and anon coming forward with some new device, either for ornament or profit, as he said, to the burgh; and no small portion of my time, that might have been more advantageously employed, was wasted in the thriftless consideration of his schemes: all which, with my advanced years, begat in me a sort of distaste to the bickerings of the council chamber; so I conferred and communed with myself, anent the possibility of ruling the town without having recourse to so unwieldy a vehicle as the wheels within wheels of the factions which the Yankee reformatory, and that projectile Mr Plan, as he was called by Mr Peevie, had inserted among us.

I will no equivocate that there was, in this notion, an appearance of taking more on me than the laws allowed; but then my motives were so clean to my conscience, and I was so sure of satisfying the people by the methods I intended to pursue, that there could be no moral fault in the trifle of illegality, which, may be, I might have been led on to commit. However, I was fortunately spared from the experiment, by a sudden change in the council.—One day Mr Hickery and Mr Plan, who had been for years colleaguering together for their own ends, happened to differ in opinion, and the one suspecting that this difference was the fruit of some secret corruption, they taunted each other, and came to high words, and finally to an open quarrel, actually shaking their neeves across the table, and, I'll no venture to deny, maybe exchanging blows.

Such a convulsion in the sober councils of a burgh town was never heard of. It was a thing not to be endured, and so I saw at the time, and was resolved to turn it to the public advantage. Accordingly, when the two angry men had sat back in their seats, bleached in the face with passion, and panting and out of breath, I rose up in my chair at the head of the table, and with a judicial solemnity addressed the council, saying, that what we had witnessed was a disgrace not to be tolerated in a Christian land; that unless we obtained indemnity for the past, and

security for the future, I would resign ; but in doing so I would bring the cause thereof before the Fifteen at Edinburgh, yea, even to the House of Lords at London ; so I gave the offending parties notice, as well as those who, from motives of personal friendship, might be disposed to overlook the insult that had been given to the constituted authority of the king, so imperfectly represented in my person, as it would seem, by the audacious conflict and misdemeanour which had just taken place.

This was striking while the iron was hot : every one looked at my sternness with surprise, and some begged me to be seated, and to consider the matter calmly.—“Gentlemen,” quo’ I, “dinna mistake me. I never was in more composure all my life.—It’s indeed no on my own account that I feel on this occasion. The gross violation of all the decent decorum of magisterial authority, is not a thing that affects me in my own person ; it’s an outrage against the state ; the prerogatives of the king’s crown are endamaged ; atonement must be made, or punishment must ensue. It’s a thing that by no possibility can be overlooked : it’s an offence committed in open court, and we cannot but take cognizance thereof.”

I saw that what I said was operating to an effect, and that the two troublesome members were confounded. Mr Hickery rose to offer some apology ; but, perceiving I had now got him in a girth, I interposed my authority, and would not permit him to proceed.

“Mr Hickery,” said I, “it’s of no use to address yourself to me. I am very sensible that ye are sorry for your fault ; but that will not do. The law knows no such thing as repentance ; and it is the law, not me nor our worthy friends here, that ye have offended. In short, Mr Hickery, the matter is such that, in one word, either you and Mr Plan must quit your seats at this table of your own free-will, or I must quit mine, and mine I will not give up without letting the public know the shame on your part that has compelled me.”

He sat down and I sat down ; and for some time the other councillors looked at one another in silence and wonder. Seeing, however, that my gentle hint was not likely to be taken, I said to the town-clerk, who was sitting at the bottom of the table,

“Sir, it’s your duty to make a minute of every thing that is done and said at the sederunts of the council; and as provost, I hereby require of you to record the particularities of this melancholy crisis.”

Mr Keelevine made an endeavour to dissuade me; but I set him down with a stern voice, striking the table at the same time with all my birr, as I said, “Sir, you have no voice here. Do you refuse to perform what I order? At your peril I command the thing to be done.”

Never had such austerity been seen in my conduct before. The whole council sat in astonishment; and Mr Keelevine prepared his pen, and took a sheet of paper to draw out a notation of the minute, when Mr Peevie rose, and after coughing three times, and looking first at me and syne at the two delinquents, said—

“My Lord Provost, I was surprised, and beginning to be confounded, at the explosion which the two gentlemen have committed. No man can designate the extent of such an official malversation, demonstrated, as it has been here, in the presence of us all, who are the lawful custodiers of the kingly dignity in this his majesty’s royal burgh. I will, therefore, not take it upon me either to apologise or to oblivate their offence; for, indeed, it is an offence that merits the most condign animadversion, and the consequences might be legible for ever, were a gentleman, so conspicuous in the town as you are, to evacuate the magistracy on account of it. But it is my balsamic advice, that rather than promulgate this matter, the two malcontents should abdicate, and that a precept should be placarded at this sederunt as if they were not here, but had resigned and evaded their places, precursive to the meeting.”

To this I answered, that no one could suspect me of wishing to push the matter further, provided the thing could be otherwise settled; and therefore, if Mr Plan and Mr Hickery would shake hands, and agree never to notice what had passed to each other, and the other members and magistrates would consent likewise to bury the business in oblivion, I would agree to the balsamic advice of Mr Peevie, and even waive my obligation to bind over the hostile parties to keep the king’s peace, so.

that the whole affair might neither be known nor placed upon record.

Mr Hickery, I could discern, was rather surprised; but I found that I had thus got the thief in the wuddy, and he had no choice; so both he and Mr Plan rose from their seats in a very sheepish manner, and looking at us as if they had unpleasant ideas in their minds, they departed forth the council-chamber; and a minute was made by the town-clerk that they, having resigned their trust as councillors, two other gentlemen at the next meeting should be chosen into their stead.

Thus did I, in a manner most unexpected, get myself rid and clear of the two most obdurate oppositionists, and by taking care to choose discreet persons for their successors, I was enabled to wind the council round my finger, which was a far more expedient method of governing the community than what I had at one time meditated, even if I could have brought it to a bearing. But, in order to understand the full weight and importance of this, I must describe how the choice and election was made, because, in order to make my own power and influence the more sicker, it was necessary that I should not be seen in the business.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE NEW COUNCILLORS.

MR PEEVIE was not a little proud of the part he had played in the storm of the council, and his words grew, if possible, longer-nebbit and more kittle than before, in so much that the same evening, when I called on him after dusk, by way of a device to get him to help the implementing of my intents with regard to the choice of two gentlemen to succeed those whom he called "the expurgated dislocators," it was with a great difficulty that I could expiscate his meaning. "Mr Peevie," said I, when we were cozily seated by ourselves in his little back parlour—the mistress having set out the gardevin and tumblers, and the lass

brought in the hot water—"I do not think, Mr Peevie, that in all my experience, and I am now both an old man and an old magistrate, that I ever saw any thing better managed than the manner in which ye quelled the hobleshow this morning, and therefore we maun hae a little more of your balsamic advice, to make a' heal among us again; and now that I think o't, how has it happent that ye hae never been a bailie? I'm sure it's due both to your character and circumstance that ye should take upon you a portion of the burden of the town honours. Therefore, Mr Peevie, would it no be a very proper thing, in the choice of the new councillors, to take men of a friendly mind towards you, and of an easy and manageable habit of will.

The old man was mightily taken with this insinuation, and acknowledged that it would give him pleasure to be a bailie next year. We then cannily proceeded, just as if one thing begat another, to discourse anent the different men that were likely to do as councillors, and fixed at last on Alexander Hodden the blanket merchant, and Patrick Fegs the grocer, both excellent characters of their kind. There was not, indeed, in the whole burgh at the time, a person of such a flexible easy nature as Mr Hodden; and his neighbour, Mr Fegs, was even better, for he was so good-tempered, and kindly, and complying, that the very callants at the grammar school had nicknamed him Barley-sugar Pate.

"No better than them can be," said I to Mr Peevie; "they are likewise both well to do in the world, and should be brought into consequence; and the way o't canna be in better hands than your own. I would, therefore, recommend it to you to see them on the subject, and, if ye find them willing, lay your hairs in the water to bring the business to a bearing."

Accordingly, we settled to speak of it as a matter in part decided, that Mr Hodden and Mr Fegs were to be the two new councillors; and to make the thing sure, as soon as I went home I told it to Mrs Pawkie as a state secret, and laid my injunctions on her not to say a word about it, either to Mrs Hodden or to Mrs Fegs, the wives of our two elect; for I knew her disposition, and that, although to a certainty not a word of the fact would escape from her, yet she would be utterly unable to rest

until she had made the substance of it known in some way or another ; and, as I expected, so it came to pass. She went that very night to Mrs Rickerton, the mother of Mr Fegs's wife, and, as I afterwards picked out of her, told the old lady that maybe, ere long, she would hear of some great honour that would come to her family, with other mystical intimations that pointed plainly to the dignities of the magistracy ; the which, when she had returned home, so worked upon the imagination of Mrs Rickerton, that, before going to bed, she felt herself obliged to send for her daughter, to the end that she might be delivered and eased of what she had heard. In this way Mr Fegs got a foretaste of what had been concerted for his advantage ; and Mr Peevie, in the mean time, through his helpmate, had, in like manner, not been idle ; the effect of all which was, that next day, every where in the town, people spoke of Mr Hodden and Mr Fegs as being ordained to be the new councillors, in the stead of the two who had, as it was said, resigned in so unaccountable a manner, so that no candidates offered, and the election was concluded in the most candid and agreeable spirit possible ; after which I had neither trouble nor adversary, but went on, in my own prudent way, with the works in hand—the completion of the new bridge, the reparation of the tolbooth steeple, and the bigging of the new schools on the piece of ground adjoining to my own at the Westergate ; and in the doing of the latter job I had an opportunity of manifesting my public spirit ; for when the scheme, as I have related, was some years before given up, on account of Mr Plan's castles in the air for educating tawny children from the East and West Indies, I inclosed my own ground, and built the house thereon now occupied by Collector Gather's widow, and the town, per consequence, was not called on for one penny of the cost, but saved so much of a wall as the length of mine extended—a part not less than a full third part of the whole. No doubt, all these great and useful public works were not done without money ; but the town was then in great credit, and many persons were willing and ready to lend ; for every thing was in a prosperous order, and we had a prospect of a vast increase of income, not only from the toll on the new bridge, but likewise from three very excellent

shops which we repaired on the ground floor of the tolbooth. We had likewise feued out to advantage a considerable portion of the town moor; so that had things gone on in the way they were in my time, there can be no doubt that the burgh would have been in very flourishing circumstances, and instead of being drowned, as it now is, in debt, it might have been in the most topping way; and if the project that I had formed for bringing in a supply of water by pipes, had been carried into effect, it would have been a most advantageous undertaking for the community at large.

But my task is now drawing to an end; and I have only to relate what happened at the conclusion of the last act of my very serviceable and eventful life, the which I will proceed to do with as much brevity as is consistent with the nature of that free and faithful spirit in which the whole of these notandums have been indited.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE RESIGNATION

SHORTLY after the battle of Waterloo, I began to see that a change was coming in among us. There was less work for the people to do, no outgate in the army for roving and idle spirits, and those who had tacks of the town lands complained of slack markets; indeed, in my own double vocation of the cloth shop and wine cellar, I had a taste and experience of the general declension that would of a necessity ensue, when the great outlay of government and the discharge from public employ drew more and more to an issue. So I bethought me, that being now well stricken in years, and, though I say it that should not, likewise a man in good respect and circumstances, it would be a prudent thing to retire and secede entirely from all farther intrusions with public affairs.

Accordingly, towards the midsummer of the year 1816, I

commenced in a far off way to give notice, that at Michaelmas I intended to abdicate my authority and power, to which intimations little heed was at first given; but gradually the seed took with the soil, and began to swell and shoot up, in so much that, by the middle of August, it was an understood thing that I was to retire from the council, and refrain entirely from the part I had so long played with credit in the burgh.

When people first began to believe that I was in earnest, I cannot but acknowledge I was remonstrated with by many, and that not a few were pleased to say my resignation would be a public loss; but these expressions, and the disposition of them, wore away before Michaelmas came; and I had some sense of the feeling which the fluctuating gratitude of the multitude often causes to rise in the breasts of those who have etitled their best to serve the ungrateful populace. However, I considered with myself that it would not do for me, after what I had done for the town and commonality, to go out of office like a knotless thread, and that, as a something was of right due to me, I would be committing an act of injustice to my family if I neglected the means of realizing the same. But it was a task of delicacy, and who could I prompt to tell the town-council to do what they ought to do? I could not myself speak of my own services—I could ask nothing. Truly it was a subject that cost me no small cogitation; for I could not confide it even to the wife of my bosom. However, I gained my end, and the means and method thereof may advantage other public characters, in a similar strait, to know and understand.

Seeing that nothing was moving onwards in men's minds to do the act of courtesy to me, so justly my due, on the Saturday before Michaelmas I invited Mr Mucklewheel, the hosier, (who had the year before been chosen into the council, in the place of old Mr Peevie, who had a paralytic, and never in consequence was made a bailie,) to take a glass of toddy with me, a way and method of peutering with the councillors, one by one, that I often found of a great efficacy in bringing their understandings into a docile state; and when we had discussed one cheerer with the usual clishmaclaver of the times, I began, as we were both birzing the sugar for the second, to speak with a circumbendibus

about my resignation of the trusts I had so long held with profit to the community.

“Mr Mucklewheel,” quo’ I, “ye’re but a young man, and no versed yet, as ye will be, in the policy and diplomatics that are requisite in the management of the town, and therefore I need not say any thing to you about what I have got an inkling of, as to the intents of the new magistrates and council towards me. It’s very true that I have been long a faithful servant to the public, but he’s a weak man who looks to any reward from the people; and after the experience I have had, I would certainly prove myself to be one of the very weakest, if I thought it was likely, that either anent the piece of plate and the vote of thanks, any body would take a speciality of trouble.”

To this Mr Mucklewheel answered, that he was glad to hear such a compliment was intended; “No man,” said he, “more richly deserves a handsome token of public respect, and I will surely give the proposal all the countenance and support in my power possible to do.”

“As to that,” I replied, pouring in the rum and helping myself to the warm water, “I entertain no doubt, and I have every confidence that the proposal, when it is made, will be in a manner unanimously approved. But, Mr Muckleweel, what’s every body’s business, is nobody’s. I have heard of no one that’s to bring the matter forward; it’s all fair and smooth to speak of such things in holes and corners, but to face the public with them is another sort of thing. For few men can abide to see honours conferred on their neighbours, though between ourselves, Mr Mucklewheel, every man in a public trust should, for his own sake, further and promote the bestowing of public rewards on his predecessors; because looking forward to the time when he must himself become a predecessor, he should think how he would feel were he, like me, after a magistracy of near to fifty years, to sink into the humility of a private station, as if he had never been any thing in the world. In sooth, Mr Mucklewheel, I’ll no deny that it’s a satisfaction to me to think that maybe the piece of plate and the vote of thanks will be forthcoming; at the same time, unless they are

both brought to a bearing in a proper manner, I would rather nothing was done at all."

"Ye may depend on't," said Mr Mucklewheel, "that it will be done very properly, and in a manner to do credit both to you and the council. I'll speak to Bailie Shuttlethrift, the new provost, to propose the thing himself, and that I'll second it."

"Hooly, hooly, friend," quo' I, with a laugh of jocularly, no ill-pleased to see to what effect I had worked upon him; "that will never do; ye're but a greenhorn in public affairs. The provost maun ken nothing about it, or let on that he doesna ken, which is the same thing, for folk would say that he was ettling at something of the kind for himself, and was only eager for a precedent. It would, therefore, ne'er do to speak to him. But Mr Birky, who is to be elected into the council in my stead, would be a very proper person. For ye ken coming in as my successor, it would very naturally fall to him to speak modestly of himself, compared with me, and therefore I think he is the fittest person to make the proposal, and you, as the next youngest that has been taken in, might second the same."

Mr Mucklewheel agreed with me, that certainly the thing would come with the best grace from my successor.

"But I doubt," was my answer, "if he kens aught of the matter; ye might however enquire. In short, Mr Mucklewheel, ye see it requires a canny hand to manage public affairs, and a sound discretion to know who are the fittest to work in them. If the case were not my own, and if I was speaking for another that had done for the town what I have done, the task would be easy. For I would just rise in my place, and say as a thing of course, and admitted on all hands, 'Gentlemen, it would be a very wrong thing of us, to let Mr Mucklewheel, (that is, supposing you were me,) who has so long been a fellow-labourer with us, to quit his place here without some mark of our own esteem for him as a man, and some testimony from the council to his merits as a magistrate. Every body knows that he has been for near to fifty years a distinguished character, and has thrice filled the very highest post in the burgh; that many great improvements have been made in his time, wherein his influence and wisdom was very evident; I would therefore pro-

pose, that a committee should be appointed to consider of the best means of expressing our sense of his services, in which I shall be very happy to assist, provided the provost will consent to act as chairman.'

"That's the way I would open the business; and were I the seconder, as you are to be to Mr Birky, I would say,

'The worthy councillor has but anticipated what every one was desirous to propose, and although a committee is a very fit way of doing the thing respectfully, there is yet a far better, and that is, for the council now sitting to come at once to a resolution on the subject, then a committee may be appointed to carry that resolution into effect.'

"Having said this, you might advert first to the vote to thanks, and then to the piece of plate, to remain with the gentleman's family as a monumental testimony of the opinion which was entertained by the community of his services and character."

Having in this judicious manner primed Mr Mucklewheel as to the procedure, I suddenly recollected that I had a letter to write to catch the post, and having told him so, "Maybe," quo' I, "ye would step the length of Mr Birky's and see how he is inclined, and by the time I am done writing, ye can be back; for after all that we have been saying, and the warm and friendly interest you have taken in this business, I really would not wish my friends to stir in it, unless it is to be done in a satisfactory manner."

Mr Mucklewheel accordingly went to Mr Birky, who had of course heard nothing of the subject, but they came back together, and he was very vogie with the notion of making a speech before the council, for he was an upsetting young man. In short, the matter was so set forward, that, on the Monday following, it was all over the town that I was to get a piece of plate at my resignation, and the whole affair proceeded so well to an issue, that the same was brought to a head to a wish. Thus had I the great satisfaction of going to my repose as a private citizen with a very handsome silver cup, bearing an inscription in the Latin tongue, of the time I had been in the council, guildry, and magistracy; and although, in the outset of

my public life, some of my dealings may have been leavened with the leaven of antiquity, yet, upon the whole, it will not be found, I think, that, one thing weighed with another, I have been an unprofitable servant to the community. Magistrates and rulers must rule according to the maxims and affections of the world; at least, whenever I tried any other way, strange obstacles started up in the opinions of men against me, and my purest intents were often more criticised than some which were less disinterested; so much is it the natural humour of mankind to jealousy and doubt the integrity of all those who are in authority and power, especially when they see them deviating from the practices of their predecessors. Posterity, therefore, or I am far mistaken, will not be angered at my plain dealing with regard to the small motives of private advantage of which I have made mention, since it has been my endeavour to show and to acknowledge, that there is a reforming spirit abroad among men, and that really the world is gradually growing better—slowly I allow; but still it is growing better, and the main profit of the improvement will be reaped by those who are ordained to come after us.

END OF THE PROVOST.

THE STEAM-BOAT.

THE STEAM-BOAT.

DEDICATION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD GWYDIR,

&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,—Being deeply indebted to your lordship's very kind consideration for the curiosity of the people at the Grand Coronation Banquet of his most excellent majesty King George the Fourth of that name, I think that I cannot do a more proper thing than to place this my book of voyages and travels under your benignant influence and auspices, with all humility; and trusting that your lordship will consider the style and matter through the green glasses of indulgence, without which, I fear, the manifold faults are of such a glaring and conspicuous character as may not be easily endured; but so considered and contemplated, the worst of them may, by the help of good nature, be wrought into a ministration for mirth, the which is not far short of a true pleasure, especially when unadulterated with malice, as all the pleasure, I hope, ever will be that may be caused by him who is thus permitted to subscribe himself, your lordship's very humble and obliged servant,

THOMAS DUFFLE

Boyle's Land, Saltmarket,
Glasgow, July 1, 1822.

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING been for several years in what Mrs MacLecket, my worthy landlady, calls a complaining way, I was persuaded by her advice to try the benefit of the sea air in the steam-boat to Greenock; and I found myself greatly advantaged by the same. I am not, however, sure that the benefit which my strength and appetite received in those sea voyages was so much owing to the change of air, and the wholesome fume of the salt-water that I breathed, as from the conversible and talkative company which I found among the other passengers; by which my spirits were maintained in a state of jocund temperance, and my thoughts so lifted out of the cares of business, that I was, for the time, a new creature, bringing back with me to behind the counter a sort of youthiness that lasted sometimes more than a fortnight; keeping off what Mrs MacLecket called the hypochonders, till I again fell out of order, by that constant constipation to the shop, which I now understand was the original cause of all my complaints.

I have often since reflected on my jaunts and travels, and the many things that I saw, as well as the extraordinary narrations of which I was participant in the hearing; and it seemed to me, that I could not better employ my time and talent, during the long winter nights, than in putting down some account of the most remarkable of the stories which medicated so veritably towards the gradual restoration of that brisk and circling state of my blood, that has made me, in a manner, as Mrs MacLecket judiciously says, a very satisfactory man.

When I had tried my hand at two or three of the stories, I read them over to Mr Thomas Sweeties, my neighbour, the grocer, and he thought them so vastly entertaining, that, by his encouragement, together with the pleasure which Mrs Maclecket seemed to take in the bits she now and then heard, when she could spare time from her householdry to listen, I was led to proceed further and further, until I compiled this book; which I hope will reward the courteous reader who may vouchsafe to favour it with an attentive perusal, as much as it did to me in

the inditing, and no author can wish his reader a more delectable benefaction. For I was so taken up, not only with the matter, but the manner of the different narrations, while I brought them back to mind, that I was transported, as it were, out of my own natural body, and put into the minds of the narrators, so as to think with their thoughts and to speak with their words, by which, as Mr Sweeties observed, an instinct for learning has been manifested on my part, such as he had never met with, and is altogether wonderful in a man who has lived in the Saltmarket since the eighty-three, in which year I gave up travelling the country with the pack, having at that time two hundred pounds gathered in the Ship Bank, besides a character for sobriety and cannyness among the merchants, which was worth more than double that sum in the way of credit.—Thank God, through all the changes that have happened since, I have kept aye my feet, and can afford to take my pleasure may be another year, although I should have no occasion for the sake of health, and that without wronging any body. I don't, however, say this of my means as a brag; but only as I am now venturing to come before the public in the book-making line, it may be known that I am not led thereto in the way of bread, but to solace myself; with a reasonable probability, at the same time, of bringing forth something that may contribute to the pastime of other folk of a sedentary habitude. I shall not, therefore, expatiate in this place at any greater length; for having thus heard the origin and occasion of my writing and sending out a book, the reader will naturally now be anxious to know of what it consists;—on which account I will stop my prefatory pen, and open with the substantiality of the matters of which I design to treat.

CHAPTER I.

IT was, I think, on the 16th day of June, in the year of our Lord, A. D. 1819, that I embarked at the Broomielaw, on board

the Waterloo steam-boat, bound to her head port, the town of Greenock, with an understanding that passengers were to be landed at any place in the course of the voyage, wheresoever their needs and affairs might require. As my adventure was for health and pleasure, I resolved to go with her to all the different places which she might be obligated to visit, and return home with her in the evening, Mrs MacLecket telling me, that there might be a risk, at my time of life, in changing my bed. Embarking then, as I have said, we got under way at eight o'clock, and shortly after, the passengers that had not breakfasted before they came out in the morning, retired to the steward's room, where they were very comfortably entertained at an easy rate—in so much, that for the ploy of the thing, I wished I had not taken mine with Mrs MacLecket; but I was over persuaded by her of the danger of going upon the water with an empty stomach. However, I had not much cause to repine at this; for while the rest were busy with the eatables, I entered into some discourse with a decent elderly gentleman, concerning foreign parts, and such matters as were material to a man like me, in going upon his first voyage. This stranger I found of a great solidity of mind that was surely past the common: he had seen much of the world, and had read the book of man through and through.

In his appearance there was nothing particular: he stooped a degree forward, and for the most part was disposed to rest his brow upon his staff, and to mind more what others said than to say much himself; but it was plain, from his looks, that this was not owing to any lack of ability or information, as I presently found. For, in mentioning to him the reason of my being in the steam-boat, and talking concerning the profit of travelling, how it opened the faculties, and enlarged the understanding, he made some very pithy and sagacious responses; until from less to more, he told me that in his youth he had visited many famous cities, as well as towns of repute, in foreign lands. One thing led to another, and it would be needless in me to relate all that passed; but in speaking about the barbarous Russians, he said, "I cannot better give you a notion of the strange mixture of savage passion and refined corruption which are often met

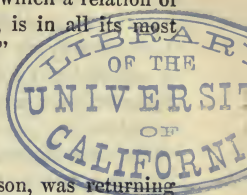
with among them, than by a domestic story, which a relation of the parties told me, and which, I doubt not, is in all its most remarkable circumstances substantially true."

THE RUSSIAN

One night as Prince Tobloski, with his son, was returning from the Taurian palace, where they had been present at a magnificent entertainment which the late empress gave to the court, his carriage was stopped in the street for a short time by an accident that had befallen a wain loaded with timber. The prince was a hale and stout old man, and possessed of a singular vigour of character. His usual residence was at Moscow; but desirous of introducing Demetrius, his son, to the empress, with all the advantages to which his rank and fortune entitled him, he had come to spend some time at Petersburg. It had been previously agreed between him and Count Ponatowski, a Polish nobleman, who also resided in the ancient capital, that Demetrius should espouse the daughter of the count; but this match was not one of those which are made in heaven.

Demetrius was in the prime of youth. It could not be said that he had reached the full maturity of manhood, for he was only nineteen; but he was finely formed, and of a gallant and manly presence. Elizabeth, his destined bride, was younger; and the report of her beauty and accomplishments was such, that it might be said, this elegant couple were formed for each other. They had, however, never met. Elizabeth having early lost her mother, had been educated at Warsaw, under the care of her grandmother, a French lady of the old school, and a passionate admirer of the New Eloise; but she was expected at Petersburg whilst Prince Tobloski was there, and Demetrius, with the anxiety of a young man, it could not entirely be said of a lover, was, at the time I am speaking of, become impatient for her arrival.

While Demetrius and his father were waiting till the impediment was removed which had arrested their carriage, a travelling equipage came furiously along, and, regardless of the cries



of the people, drove full tilt against the timber wain, and was upset. The shrieks of a female instantly induced Demetrius to spring out to her assistance, and he had the happiness to rescue a beautiful girl unhurt; but her companion, an elderly matron, had received a severe contusion on the forehead, and was almost senseless.

By their language, dress, and manners, they appeared to be Frenchwomen, and persons of some consequence, and Demetrius begged his father to take them to his own house in his carriage, till their friends could be informed of their situation.

Prince Tobloski, in his manners, was a rude and unlettered man, but he had still much of the national hospitality in his disposition, and at once received the strangers into his coach, and carried them home to his palace, which was but a short distance from the scene of the accident. All this did not occupy many minutes. The two ladies, on reaching the palace, were committed to the care of the domestics, and the father and son retired to their respective apartments.

Medical assistance was immediately procured for the old lady; and, in the mean time, the strangers learned that it was to the Prince Tobloski and his son they were indebted for the assistance they had received. This information afforded them much pleasure. In a word, it was the fair Elizabeth and her grandmother, the old Countess Ponatowski.

The countess, notwithstanding the pain of her wound, had the presence of mind to whisper Elizabeth to conceal their names. The fantastic old woman was delighted with the romantic incident which had brought the fated lovers so unexpectedly together; nor was the gentle victim of her stratagem averse to the plot of the little drama in which she was to bear the principal part.

The contusion which the countess had received proved very slight, but it so disfigured her appearance, that next morning she could not be persuaded to allow a male eye to look at her; even the doctor, who was, perhaps, in some degree requisite to the re-edification of her face, was admitted with difficulty.

In the mean time, it was concerted between the ladies that the countess should be represented as the widow of an Amster-

dam banker, who had been ruined by the French Revolution, and Elizabeth as her niece; and that their object in coming to Petersburg was to establish an academy for young ladies, Elizabeth having been purposely educated for the profession. Accordingly, enough was given out to the servants of the palace to enable them to understand this, which being reported to the prince, served materially to abate the degree of consideration with which he was previously disposed to treat his guests. It had also, in some degree, the same effect on Demetrius, who had been much struck with the beauty and elegance of Elizabeth, and was not altogether satisfied that her image should take the place in his mind which had been previously occupied with the fancy portraiture of the unseen daughter of Ponatowski. However, during the morning, he resolved to pay the ladies a visit in their apartment, and was not displeased, on being admitted, to find that the countess would not permit herself to be visible, on account of the swelling and contusion on her forehead; so that he had an agreeable conversation with Elizabeth, who played off all the pretty coquetries of her sex, to show herself to the best advantage, delighted to see that her intended spouse was not that rough and hideous bear which her grandmother had taught her sometimes to dread, by representing the Russians as still but the unlicked cubs of mankind—neither grown into civilization, nor tamed into politeness.

This interview answered all the purposes of the old lady's stratagem. Demetrius was smitten with the charms of Elizabeth, and knew scarcely which most to admire, the beauty of her form and countenance—the arch simplicity, or the grace of her manners—and the intelligence of her conversation.

In returning to his father, who did not think it requisite to condescend to visit the widow of an Amsterdam banker, he gave only a very temperate description of Elizabeth; but the prince had seen enough of her the preceding evening to be interested in her appearance also. It would be ridiculous to say that an old Russian nobleman, of the court of Catherine the Second, could, by any possibility, be a man of gallantry; but if Tobloski had none of the delicacy, he had all the animal energy of the character; and while his son was inhaling love and admiration

from the accents of Elizabeth, he was actually meditating the means of appropriating her beauty to himself.

It happened, in this juncture, that Count Ponatowski called, to mention that he had received letters from his mother, the countess, and that he expected her with Elizabeth at Petersburg, in the course of a day or two. Tobloski then mentioned the adventure which he had met with in coming from court the evening before, and described Elizabeth in such glowing terms, that the count lightly proposed they should together visit her. This was a mere act of jocularly on the part of the count, who was, in many respects, a character not only of finer ore, but of richer workmanship than Tobloski, being indeed a gentleman in the true acceptation of the term, who, though constrained by political circumstances then to reside in Russia, had, in his youth, travelled over all the south of Europe, and passed several years both in London and Paris. However, Tobloski assented to his proposal, and a servant was sent to inform Elizabeth that the Prince and Count Ponatowski were coming to honour her with a visit.

Elizabeth, from childhood, had never seen her father. When she was only in her fourth year, he had been obliged to leave Warsaw, and go into Russia, on account of the jealousy which the imperial government entertained of his politics; for he was a man of open and firm principles, and one of those noblemen to whom the Poles had turned their views, when they meditated the deliverance of their country. But she was well acquainted with the worth and virtues of his character, from his letters, and still more, perhaps, by the encomiums of those friends who had sympathized with him in his patriotism, and lamented in secret the thralldom of Poland. She was, in consequence, deeply affected when she heard his name pronounced, and could with difficulty be restrained, by the exhortations of the countess, from rushing into his arms. When the prince and the count were approaching, the old lady retired on account of her wounded face, and Elizabeth received them with an interesting embarrassment, which rendered her grace and loveliness still more striking than the agitation in which Tobloski had seen her the preceding evening.

The admiration of the prince being altogether excited by her personal beauty, and having that judicious contempt for the mercantile profession which so well became an ancient magnate of Moscow, he was not quite so guarded as a gentleman would have been, in the terms which he employed in directing the attention of the count to the luxuriance of her appearance. But independent of her emotion, which affected the compassion of Ponatowski, there was something in the general cast of her face and figure, that came upon his heart like a burst of light to the captive in the dungeon; and he felt himself moved, by an irresistible sympathy, to shield her with his protection. He knew too well the character of Tobloski, not to be aware of the intentions which he meditated, and the danger in which she was placed.

The visit being one of courtesy, lasted only a few minutes; but in retiring, Ponatowski turned back, and, taking Elizabeth kindly by the hand, said, that he pitied her misfortunes, and that, as soon as her aunt was in a condition to leave the Tobloski palace, he hoped she would inform him where they took up their residence, and he would be happy to assist them in their academical views, being confident, from the little he had seen, that they were well fitted for the business they intended to undertake. Elizabeth grasped her father's hand with affection, delighted with this unexpected compliment, and almost betrayed herself by the vivid expression of joy which at that moment sparkled in her beautiful countenance.

Tobloski, who saw this short scene, was not satisfied with its effect. He knew the passion which actuated his own bosom, and it would be difficult to say that he judged uncharitably, when he estimated the feeling of the count by his own. But he was prompt and decisive; he had all that young energy which is characteristic of the rising empire of which he was one of the most eminent nobles; nor were his designs ever weakened by any of those scruples which paralyze the intentions of more refined libertines.

As soon as the count had quitted the palace, Tobloski sent for Elizabeth, and informed her that his son Demetrius was on the point of marriage with the daughter of Ponatowski, hourly

expected from Warsaw, and that he thought he could not confer a greater compliment on his intended daughter-in-law, than by providing her with an attendant who seemed in so many respects suitable. He therefore proposed to Elizabeth, that she should continue to reside with her aunt at the palace, and that he would adequately reward their attention and service to the bride.

Elizabeth, pleased and diverted with this proposal, readily acceded to his wishes; and the old lady, on hearing the result, was highly delighted with the progress and success of her stratagem:—the accident, which rendered herself unfit to be seen by male eyes, and by which she avoided being present at the interview with her son, was an occurrence calculated to promote the anticipated *dénouement* of what she deemed an amusing comedy.

Among the domestics in the Tobloski palace, was an old German officer of the name of Bruhl, to whose particular care Demetrius had been consigned from the age of five years. He was a grave, erect, and venerable man, full of pure and honourable sentiments, possessed of great insight of character, and of a profound, but somewhat suspicious, knowledge of the world. He loved Demetrius with the affection of a parent, and treated him, even from childhood, with the frankness of a friend, by which he had essentially contributed to render that youthful nobleman one of the most promising ornaments of the empire.

Demetrius, immediately after his interview with Elizabeth, had gone to Bruhl, and confessed to him the extraordinary interest which she had awakened in his bosom. The old man was disturbed by this information; for he knew the latent ardour and ingenuousness of Demetrius's character, and perceived, that while he ran the risk of fixing his affections indissolubly on a lovely creature, by all accounts so personally worthy of them, he would disdain to practise that equivocation which might be requisite to break off the long betrothed match with the daughter of Ponatowski. He therefore at once spoke earnestly to Demetrius on the subject, and advised him, as a man of honour, pledged to bear his affections undivided to his bride, to avoid the company of the stranger. Demetrius promised, and, per-

haps, would have adhered to his promise, but for the arrangement which his father had made with Elizabeth. On receiving the information, he went back to Bruhl, and, with considerable animation, entreated his interposition. "If," he exclaimed, "this fascinating girl is to remain in my household, I am undone:—my own happiness is wrecked, with that of the amiable Elizabeth Ponatowski, who, I am assured, can be in no respect inferior to this fatal stranger."

Bruhl made no reply for some time, but ruminated, evidently perplexed; at last he advised Demetrius to go at once to Roloskehow, under the pretext of superintending the preparations which were making for his marriage in that villa, which had been recently purchased for his summer residence—and to this Demetrius in the spirit of virtuous resolution, readily agreed; but in retiring from the study of Bruhl, as he descended the stairs, he passed the door which led to the suite of apartments occupied by the strangers. It was open, and he paused, half inclined to enter—perhaps he would have passed on, but in the same moment the mild and musical voice of Elizabeth, heard within, charmed him from his determination.

He found her seated beside the countess—the old lady was delighted at this unexpected visit, and made so many coy and prattling apologies for her lugubrious bandages, that Demetrius, independent altogether of the delicious spell of Elizabeth's presence, was induced to enter into a lively conversation with her, which had the effect of thickening the plot, and strengthening the mutual affection, which, from the first night, had sprung up between the lovers. In this situation, Tobloski himself abruptly entered—he was surprised and disconcerted to find his son so much engaged with the ladies, and said, somewhat more sharply than he intended should be observed—"What will Elizabeth Ponatowski say to this?"—Demetrius at these words blushed, and immediately withdrew from the palace, leaving word with the master of the household, that he was gone to Roloskehow.

The old countess, without being herself a woman of intrigue, possessed a great deal of that sort of knowledge and discernment, which qualified her to detect the machinations of it in others; and

she was not long of perceiving, after the sudden entrance of the old prince, that his object, in requesting Elizabeth to remain in the palace, was not so disinterestedly complimentary to his intended daughter-in-law, as he affected, and she determined, on this account, to reap a little entertainment at his particular expense. Accordingly, she entered into conversation with him, in a strain of gayety, so very like levity, that the obtuse tact of the sensualist could not discover the difference. Before they had been long together, he was led to suspect that the academical project was a mere pretext, and that, in fact, the old lady had brought her beautiful niece to the imperial market.

The coarseness of Tobloski's manners, and the freedom of his conversation with her grandmother, inspired Elizabeth with aversion and disgust. She forgot, in the indignation of the moment, her assumed character; and, with a pride and port becoming the daughter of the noble Ponatowski, she quitted the room. This afforded the ancient coquette and the old sinner an opportunity to speak more at their ease, by which the countess, with true feminine address, succeeded in receiving from Tobloski a proposal to resign Elizabeth to him, and, in sportive malice, she cunningly promised every assistance to his wishes. Knowing, however, the purity of Elizabeth's mind, she resolved to keep this a secret from her; but in order to gain time for the development of her scheme, and also that her face might be in a condition to be seen by strangers, upon Tobloski quitting her, she wrote a letter to her son, the count, antedated from Warsaw, informing him, that she would not leave that city so soon as she had originally intended, but that assuredly he might expect to see her with Elizabeth at Petersburg on a day fixed, the third from that on which she was then writing. This letter she dispatched to Ponatowski, as if it had been brought by a traveller just arrived.

Meanwhile, Bruhl had reflected on the hazards to which his favourite was exposed, and, aware of Tobloski's decision and sensuality, was at no loss to appreciate the motives which had induced him so promptly to engage Elizabeth for the daughter of Ponatowski. He therefore determined, if possible, to save her from his artifices, believing that he had already secured her

lover from danger. With this purpose, he lost no time in going to Elizabeth, whom he found alone, the countess being at the moment in her own room engaged with her letter. His interview was brief, and his conversation abrupt; he merely said, that he had come to caution her that she ought not to remain any longer in the palace, but depart from it without delay, and obtain as speedily as possible some safer asylum.

The sincerity of this venerable man made his advice impressive, although, to Elizabeth, the equivoque of her situation might have been supposed calculated to render it amusing. Her feelings, however, had received a shock from the freedom of Tobloski's conversation with her grandmother, and she could not rally her spirits into their wonted playfulness.

The warning of Bruhl sank upon her with an ominous solemnity, and when the countess returned into the room, soon after he had withdrawn, she remonstrated with her against continuing any longer their deception. But the romantic and gay old woman was now full of her project, and laughed her into comparative good-humour, at the same time agreeing that it was not expedient they should remain any longer in the Tobloski palace. But this was only a part of her plot; and she proposed that they should remove that very evening, in order, as she intended, but without disclosing her motive, that the passion of Tobloski might be exhibited in some ridiculous posture.

In the afternoon they retired to a hotel, of which the countess took care to apprise the prince, by writing him a note, thanking him for the hospitality which she had received in his mansion. This produced the desired effect. The same evening the hoary libertine paid them a visit; but his attentions to Elizabeth were so rude and open that she repulsed them with indignation.—Her grandmother laughed, while by a signal she induced the prince to withdraw, who, believing he left an effectual minister behind, immediately retired.

Elizabeth was vexed with her grandmother's levity, and the countess, affecting to be grieved by what had taken place, proposed that next day they should remove to the residence of Ponatowski; Elizabeth was anxious to do so immediately, but her wish was overruled.

The count, on receiving his mother's letter, believing that she would not be in Petersburg for three days, went to spend the interval with a friend who resided in the country, about three miles from the city. The house of this friend was situated on the skirts of a wood, not far from a hunting-lodge belonging to Tobloski. On the one side, the country was open and bare; but on the other, the forest and several rising grounds, that approximated to the character of hills, embraced the spacious moorland, as it might be called, with the arms, as it were, of a crescent.

The count's friend resided at the foot of one of these hills, and the mansion had a rural aspect, but the lodge of Tobloski stood within the wood. It was without any enclosure around it, and the architecture was in a strange sylvan and fantastic style.

On the day after his arrival, as Ponatowski was walking alone towards the lodge, which he had never seen, and which his friend had described to him as a very grotesque edifice, he saw one of Tobloski's carriages drive up to the door, and two females alight and enter.—A sudden impulse, which he could not describe, prompted him to go towards them, but an unaccountable restraint at the same time held him back, and he returned to his friend's, depressed with a dark and melancholy presentiment, that he could neither explain nor shake off. He was disturbed with a persuasion that one of the ladies was the beautiful stranger who had so lately moved his best affections, and he could not allow himself to think that a maiden so fair, so amiable, and so young, could be there a willing victim.

The summer was at this time so far advanced, that the night was reduced into a mere twilight; but the twilight of the Russian summer is a state of repose far different from that of our more southern latitudes. Here after sunset, a variety of cheerful sounds still continue gradually subsiding, until the bell of the village clock, or the bay of the watch-dog, are all that remain; and even these belong to the old dominion of night. But the Russian midnight retains the glowing amber colour of evening, without any of that subsiding cadence of sounds, which with us harmonizes so well, if I may use the expression, with the fading tints of the daylight.

Ponatowski, on retiring to his chamber, could not sleep. His imagination was busy with recollections of the past; and the image of his daughter, whom he had left a lovely and artless child, was mingled with the departed hopes of his young ambition, and the wrongs of his dismembered and injured country.

When he had lain down about two hours, he rose and looked out at the window. It was still so light, that the moon, although in her full round of brightness, and high in her meridian power, looked pale, strewing her ineffectual lustre upon the woods so feebly, that it only served to show the deeper shadows cast by the radiance of the morning travelling to her eastern gate, so very little below the northern horizon. An awful silence filled the whole air to such a degree, that it may be said to have been palpable. It was as if all living things and airy motions were suspended in the world, and nothing was going on but the mighty spheres of nature, wheeling their silent courses through the depths and abysses of eternity.

Ponatowski felt the sentiment of the moment, and gazing abroad on the solitude with devotional enthusiasm, he heard a cry at a distance, and instantly opened the casement to listen; after a short interval it was repeated, and it resounded through the hollow silence of that peaceful Russian night with a supernatural ring of distress. He listened again; the cries came from Tobloski's lodge; and he was soon, by their repetition, able to discover the voices of females in distress. A pause ensued, and he then heard but one voice. The person was wildly screaming in the open air. He immediately alarmed the house, and, being already dressed, ran out to the assistance of the stranger. On reaching the door, the smell of fire was perceptible in the air, and a vast column of smoke was rising to the heavens from the lodge of Tobloski.

The count hastened to the spot, followed by his friend and all the domestics. In their way they found the old countess insensible on the ground; but without waiting for her recovery, two of the servants were ordered to carry her to the house, and see her properly attended, while the count hastened forward.

By the time he reached the lodge, the flames were raging from all the windows, and the roof was sinking in beneath a gloomy

column of dense smoke and fire, which it seemed unable to sustain. Tobloski himself and his servants were out and looking at the burning, which indeed defied all resistance; but there was something in the deportment of the prince which made the count shudder;—"This is a sad accident," said Tobloski to him as he came up, "and the more to be deplored, as that beautiful Dutch girl, whom you saw the day before yesterday in my palace, has, I fear, fallen a victim. The fire was first discovered in her apartment."

"Were you not there at the time?" said Ponatowski sternly. * * *—

—Just at this passage of the gentleman's story, the engine of the boat was stopped, and the captain told him that they were forenent Erskine Ferry, where he was to be landed; by which I was greatly disappointed, having been vastly entertained with what he had related, and making no manner of doubt that the rest of the tale would be equally edifying. But it was not to be expected that he would sail onward with me, and break his engagement with the minister of Old Kilpatrick, where he was going to take his dinner. However, to return to the matter of the Russian tale, upon rehearsing it to Mr Sweeties, he was of opinion that it would make an excellent stage play, if we could have got to the end of it, which made him and me try our hand to devise a consolatory conclusion, but we found, however, it was not in our power to make any conclusion at all; and, what I have thought very extraordinary, when we endeavoured to write out a sequel, it was not at all in the same fine style of language that the traveller employed, but in a queer perjink kind of a way, that gave neither of us any thing like satisfaction;—wherefore in this, the inditing of my voyages and travels, I have thought it very advisable not to ingraft the endeavours of me and Mr Sweeties to eke out the stories, but just to tell them as I got them, whether told to the end or broken off in the middle.

But what I the most regret in the interruption of the Russian story, is the want of those connect moral reflections which I am sure the narrator would have made, had not the thread of his narration been snapped in twain by the steam-engine stopping to let him go on shore.

After I had wished him a good-morning, I sat for some time by myself in meditation on what he had been relating, and when I had considered the transient nature of all temporal hopes and prospects, I went and seated myself beside another passenger, a creditable-looking woman ; but as to her and what she told me, I must pause for the present to remark, that the voyage from the Broomielaw to Erskine Ferry is a most pleasant sail in fair weather, and that there is an agreeable diversity of prospects and gentleman's seats on the banks of the river. But of late years the salmon-fishery is not what it was in old times, when vessels sailed from Renfrew to the city of Naples and Genoa in Italia with cargoes of kipper and salted salmon, which was a great trade, before the Newfoundland cod-fish came into vogue, as I have heard said. It is supposed that the fish in the Glasgow arms was emblematic of the lucrative abundance of that traffic : but however this may be, it is not my intention to meddle with matters of controversy and antiquity, but in an easy methodical way to tell the different things worthy of being placed on record, with which I was diverted and enlivened in my various aqueous undertakings for the benefit of my health, in the manner already precluded in my prefatory intimation.

CHAPTER II.

FOR some space of time after I took my seat beside the decent woman, mentioned by me in the foregoing pages, we had a blithsome conversation concerning the fine weather and the pleasantry of a steam-boat, as a vehicle for travelling by water. But judge of my surprise, when I found out that my present companion had, like her predecessor, visited many far off parts of the Continent ; which I discovered by her speaking of the towns of Ghent, and Bruges, and Brussels, and of the Dutch canals, and the schuyts that sail therein, like the track-boats between Port-Dundas and Lock No. 16. I could not have thought from her appearance that she had been such a venturesome woman, fat

less that she was then on her way home from Waterloo to the shire of Ayr, where she was the widow of a farmer, managing the tack of the mailing, "for the behoof," as she said, "of a bastard oye, her own bairns being a' dead, and awa' to their Maker in heaven." I say, it was not to be suspected from her looks, that she had been so far a-field; for she was of a sedate countenance, and clad in the plain apparel of a bien west-kintra wife, wearing a red cloak, trimmed with grey and white fur, the cloth of which was of the best sort—on her head she had a black silk cap, gausey, and none hampered either in the magnitude or the ribands; and in her hand a bundle, tied in a mourning shawl, that was seemingly some four or five years old in the fashion, but not greatly damaged by tear or wear.

Our discourse from less to more went on at last into particulars, but without coming to any regular issue till we had reached Dumbarton Castle, at the sight of which my fellow-traveller gave a deep sigh, saying, "It was a strange thing for her, a woman—but she could not tell how it was, that the sight of soldiers, and other implements of the deadly traffic of war, warmed her heart, even while they made it sorrowful. I have been," said she, "as I was telling you, o'er the sea, by my leevin lane, for nae ither end or purpose but to see the place where the great battle was fought and won. Naeboddy at hame kens where I have been, nor what took me there; but now I can lay down my head in thankfulness, for the wish of the mother's heart within me has been satisfied." She then, after some other sagacious and sensible observes, went on to tell me all about her history and travels.

THE SOLDIER'S MOTHER

Mr gudeman has frien's in East-Lothian, and upon a notion of visiting them between haytime and har'st, I set out frae hame, about three weeks syne, taking my passage in the steam-boat at Ardrossan for Glasgow, where I stayed with my cousin, Mrs Treddles, the manufacturer's wife, and next day went to Port-Dundas, whence I sailed on the canal in the track-boat to Falkirk, with this bundle in my hand.

Being a lanely widow woman, I was blate amang strangers in the boat; but there was a drummer-laddie, with a Waterloo crown hinging at his bosom, and I made up to him, or rather, I should say, he made up to me, for he was a gleg and birky callan, no to be set down by a look or a word. I wasna only a widow woman, but a bairnless mother, which made me kindly to a' ramplor weans; for my ain were laddies, stout and stirring, though only ane of them came to manhood. But it was no because I was a forlorn widow that no ither noticed, nor because I was gladdened with the bold and free spirit of the drummer-laddie, that I gave him a share, no unasked, it's true, of the store in my bundle—I had a far deeper reason. For my only son had many a year before gone off with the soldiers, and I could never hear aught concerning him. He was a braw and brave lad, a sightlier was not to be met with in a' Carrick, Coil, or Cunningham; but he was of a wild and roving disposition, and would never settle to the plough. It is his bastard bairn that I am bringing up for the mailing. Many a sore heart he gave me; but there was a winsome way about him, that soon made me forgive and forget his faults. Perhaps in that I was overly lenient; but it was a sin that I hope the Lord, in his mercy, will remember in gentleness; for in the wisdom of his dispensations, he had taken from me all his other gifts—the four elder brothers of my gallant and light-hearted prodigal.

But what mother can remember the errors of her fatherless bairn?—I have forgotten a' those of my roving Willy, for he was no man's enemy but his own. He gaed to the Ayr races in the year fourteen; and forgathering there with some other free-natured lads like himself, they sat lang singing the sangs of Robin Burns, and dipping o'er deep in the barley bree. In coming out to gang to their lodgings, they happened to fall in with some of the ne'er-do-weel gentlemen that was at the races; whether it was in a house or the crown of the causey, I never heard the rights o't; but they fell out and fought, and my unlucky bairn, being at the time kindled with drink, and of a natural spirit that wouldna brook the weight of the king's hand, far less a blow in the face from Sir Patrick Malice; he struck the poor divor with such a dreadful arm, that be made his head

dash against the stanes of the causey. Every body thought Sir Patrick was killed outright. He lay lang senseless, and the fright caused sobriety to a' present. Both sides cried to Willy to flee; for the gentlemen were as convinced of their error as the farming lads. My Willy fled straight to Glasgow, which he reached in the morning. We had credit with our friends the Treddles; there they supplied him with siller, and he went off to London the same day. Pursued by his own conscience, thinking he had committed a murder, and fearing to let any body know where he was, we never had a scrape of a pen from him, till he was on the eve of embarking as a dragoon soldier at Portsmouth for Flanders. Nor would he have written then, but he happened to see as it were a ghost—Sir Patrick alive and weel, in the Isle of Wight, where he was for the benefit of mild air, having run out his health and fortune.

This was the last and only letter I had ever from him, for he was slain in the great day of Waterloo; and, as one of his comrades wrote to me, died, not leaving a braver heart, or a better man, in the British army.—It was a strange thing; but instead of sorrow, this letter made my heart triumph; and from that day, though the king may boast the victory, and the duke of the fame, there's no a breast in a' the three kingdoms that thinks of Waterloo with more pride than mine. I put on mournings, it's true, but they were to me as garments of praise—and I thanked the Lord for the manner in which he had rewarded me for the cares and anxieties of being a mother.

This was the chief cause of my discoursing with the drummer-laddie, who I saw had been at Waterloo; and from him I learnt it was neither so far off, nor in a Pagan lan', that the battle was fought, as I fancied. He said I had only to take the smack at Leith for London, and then the coach there for Dover, and I would be in no time at Brussels, where every body could show me the road to the field of battle.

After getting into the coach, at Lock No. 16, for Edinburgh, I thought of what the laddie had said, and I felt it would be a satisfaction to my heart to visit the grave of my brave Willy. As I had come provided with siller to buy some articles on my return at Glasgow, I was in want of nothing for the journey; so,

instead of going to our cousins in East-Lothian, I went directly to Leith, and embarked in a smack that was to sail the next morning for London. We had a pleasant voyage, and the captain, who was a most discreet man, saw me safe in a coach for Dover. I did not tell him where I was going; but on my coming back, when I said where I had been, he thought it for me a wonderful undertaking, I having no guide nor knowledge of the language. But I followed the drummer-laddie's direction; for after passing the sea in the packet at Dover, I just pointed to the folk that came round me, and said Waterloo, which they all understood. A grand English gentleman came up to me on the shore, as I was standing enquiring my way, and he told me that I ought to have had a passport; but when I said that I was the mother of a Scotch Grey, going to see my son's grave at Waterloo, he was wonderful affected, and said, that neither money nor interest would be wanting to help me on. I told him, however, that I stood in no need of money; and that it was an old saying, that a woman with a Scotch tongue in her head, was fit to gang over the world. It was surprising the attention he paid me; for being obligated, on account of coming without a pass ticket, to go before a magistrate, he went there with me, and told the magistrate in French all about me, and where I was going, by which he got the magistrate, not only to give me a pass, but likewise he gave me a letter to a friend of his own, a high man that was living about the court at Brussels. Thus did I experience, that it was only necessary for me to say I was going to Waterloo, in order to be well treated.

By the advice of the English gentleman, I went with some French ladies in a coach to a canal, where we embarked in a schuyt, as they called the track-boat, and, after stopping and changing at various places and ancient grand towns, which, however, I did not look much at, we came to the city of Brussels, where one of the ladies kept a bookselling shop, who very civilly invited me to stay at her house, and would take nothing for the trouble, saying only, for she could speak no English—"Waterloo"—meaning, as I thought, that she was paid already by what the bravery of my Willy had helped to do there.

On the next day, she went with me herself to the house of the English gentleman's friend, who was likewise from London, with his lady seated among a nest of bonny bairns, with fair curly heads, that were far more beautiful than clusters of pearl. They read the letter, and treated me as if I was a world's wonder, saying they would take me in their coach to Waterloo. But I told them I would not put them to that trouble, for my thought was to go alone ; but it was a proud thing for me, that gentry in their station of life could be so civil because I had a son lying at Waterloo. They insisted, however, that I should take a refreshment of wine, and wait until they could procure a proper person to go with me to the place.

That day I stayed at Brussels, and they sent one of their servant lasses, a French maiden that could speak some English, round the town with me, and she described to me the panic that she was in at the time of the battle, and how the waggons, horses, and cannon, and wounded soldiers, filled the streets. It was indeed such a thing to hear of, that the like is not to be met with in any book out of the Bible.

The English family got a man to go with me, who had been a Highland soldier, from Moidart, in Lochaber. He lost an arm at Waterloo, and afterwards married a Dutchwoman that keeps a tobacconist's shop in the market, forenent the townhouse, and was settled with his pension at Brussels. Him and me set out on our feet soon in the morning, and as we were walking along he told me many particulars ; but he said overly mickle anent the Highlanders, as if he would have given to them all the glory of the day, although it is well known the Scotch Greys were in the front, and foremost with the victory. Except in this, Corporal Macdonald was a sensible man, and showed me both far and near where the fray was bloodiest, and where the duke fought, and Bonaparte began to run away. But the last place he took me to was a field of strong wheat. "There," said he, "it was that the Scotch Greys suffered most. Their brave blood has fattened the sod, that the corn springs here so greenly." I looked around with the tear in my e'e, but I could see no hillock to mark where the buried lay, and my heart filled fu', and I sat down on the ground and Macdonald beside me,

and he said nothing, but continued for a time silent, till I had poured out my sorrow.

As we were sitting, communing with the dead and gone, he happened to notice a bit of a soldier's coat, and, pulling it out of the yird, drew with it an old rusty gully knife. "This," said Macdonald, as he lifted it, "has belonged to some brave fellow." But think what I felt when, in that same identical knife, I beheld a proof and testimony that my poor Willy could no be far from the spot where we then were. It was a knife that his father bought, and I knew it by the letters of his name, burned out upon the horn of the heft. I seized upon it in the hands of the corporal, as if it had been a precious relic of a great price, and I have it now in my bundle. But I would weary you to sleep, were I to recount only the half of what I saw and felt on the field of battle at Waterloo.

It was far in the afternoon, indeed gloaming, before we returned to Brussels, and the English family had sent three times to enquire if I had come back. I was fatigued and my heart was heavy, so I did not go to them that night, but took a dish of tea with Mrs Macdonald, the corporal's Dutch wife, who was a remarkable civil woman; but having no knowledge of one another's tongue, we could hold but small discourse. At night I went back to the house of Madam Buckenbacht, the bookselling lady that had been so discreet to me, and there found the servant lass that gaed round the town with me, to interpret between us. By her I heard, that the day following, a French millender lady of her acquaintance was going to London to buy goons; and meaning to take Mechlin in her way, it would be a fine opportunity for me to go with her, which I was glad to hear of—so Madam Vaurien and me came off by break of day in a schuyt on the canal; but, although she could speak but little English, and me no French, I soon saw that she was a pawkie carlin, the true end and intent of her journey being to take over a cargo of laces to the London market; for after dark, in the public-house at Mechlin, where we slept that night, she persuaded me to sew to my sark tail, and other canny places, mony an ell of fine Flanders lace; and it was well for her I did so, for when we got to the English coast at Harwich, by which round-

about gate she brought me, the customhouse-officers, like so many ravens, turned Madam Vaurien, with all her bags and bundles, as it were, inside out, calling her an old stager; in the doing of which they seized upon all she had; but having no jealousy of me, I escaped untouched, and brought safe to hand in London all the lace about me. At first, Madam Vaurien made a dreadful cry, and when the men were handling her, declared she was a ruined woman; but when she got me and herself safe out of the coach, and into her lodgings in London, she said that she did not care for what had been taken, the same being of no value, compared with what was about me.

I was not overly content with Madam Vaurien for this, nor did I think, upon consideration, that either Madam Buckenbacht was so disinterested in her kindness, when I came to understand that the two madams were gude-sisters. But I had been at Waterloo; I had sat near the grave of my gallant Willy; and I had brought with me a token more precious than fine gold—and all other things were as nothing.

On the next day Madam Vaurien, who was well acquaint with the ways of London, got a person to go with me to Wapping, and I saw, in passing, many a fairlie and fine thing, such as St Paul's and the Tower, till we came to the smack's place on the river, where I found the bark I had come in ready to sail that very night. As I carried my bundle aye in my hand, I had nothing to make ready for the voyage; so I steppit on board, and, in four days after, was set on shore at the pier of Leith, and now I am so far on my way back to my own dwelling.

We were at this pendicle of the narration when the steam-boat came opposite to the old castle of Newark, by which a break was made in the soldier's mother's story; but it was of no consequence, for, as she said, her tale properly began and ended with Leith, where she had taken shipping, and was restored in safety to her native land. We had therefore leisure, as we sailed along, to observe the beauties of Port-Glasgow, which is a town of some note in the shipping trade, but more famous on account of its crooked steeple with a painted bell, the like, as I was told, not being in all the west of Scotland. However, in this matter, as Mr Sweeties argued with me, I had a plain proof of the

advantages of travelling, and of the exaggerations in which travellers sometimes deal, for, upon a very careful inspection of the steeple, I could see neither crook nor flaw in it; and as for the bell, I can speak on the veracity of my own ears, that be it painted or be it gilded, it is a very fine sounding bell—as good every bit as the one in the Brig-gate steeple of our own city, than which no better bell need be. At the same time, it behoves me to observe, that I do not undertake to avouch that the steeple of Port-Glasgow has not got any thraw; for considering, as was pointed out to me by a jocose gentleman from Greenock, who was also a passenger, that both the townhouse and steeple are erected on forced ground, it was very probable it might have declined from the perpendicular, and that the story of its twist may, therefore, have arisen from the probability or likelihood of the accident taking place. I have heard, however, since, that the Greenock gentlemen are not altogether to be trusted in the repetition of any story derogatory to the exploits and ornaments of Port-Glasgow; for that, from an ancient date, there has been feud and hostility between the two towns, insomuch that “the Port” has been apprehensive of a design on the part of Greenock to stop the navigation of the river, and utterly to effect their ruin, by undoing their harbour, which is one of the best and safest in the Clyde, a *caput mortuum* of emptiness, as much as it often is in the spring of the year, when the vessels that trade therein are all out seeking employment in foreign countries. Indeed, I have myself some reason to think, that the aforesaid Greenockian was not altogether without a spice of malice in his remarks; for he made me observe how very few of the Port-Glasgow lums were reeking, which, he said, was a proof of the inhospitable character of the inhabitants, showing, that neither roast nor boil was preparing in the houses, beyond what was requisite for the frugal wants of the inmates. But although there was truth over all controversy in the observe, Mr Sweeties has told me that, on some occasions, he has seen not only plenty, but both punch and kindness, in houses in Port-Glasgow, highly creditable to the owners; and, I think, there must be surely some foundation for the notion, although I cannot speak from my own personal experience, for the soldier's mother having a

friend from Ayrshire in the town, left us there, and, by her absence, obligated me to look out for another companion to entertain me in the remainder of the voyage. But this was not a matter of such facility as might be thought, for the major number of the passengers being for Greenock, they were all taken up with counting by their watches how long time they would be of reaching the customhouse stairs, and telling one another of the funny deeds and sayings of some of their town-folk, who, by all accounts, are the cleverest people in the whole world, and not only the cleverest, but the drollest, having a capacity by common, and a manner, when they are inclined for sport, that is most surprising. I shall, however, have something more to say about them by and by ; meanwhile, let it be enough for the present, that, in the whole course of the voyage from Port-Glasgow to Greenock, I got no satisfaction. They turned their backs to my enquiries as if I had been nobody, little reflecting that the time would come, (as may now be seen here,) when I would depict them in their true colours, and teach them that there is truth in the proverb, which says, "It's not the cloak that makes the friar ;" for I perceived they thought me but an auld-fashioned man, little knowing that there was the means in my shop of getting as fashionable a coat as the sprucest of the saucy sparks had on, to say nothing of the lining I could put in the pouches.

When we came to the town of Greenock, I was much surprised to see it a place of great extent and traffic, of which I had no notion ; more especially was I struck with wonder at the customhouse, that is a most stately erection, bearing a similitude to our jail ; and I was grieved that I had paid my passage to Helensburgh, because it prevented me from viewing the vast of shipping and curiosities of this emporium ; but as I have, through life, resigned myself at all times, and on all occasions, to the will, as it were, of the things I could not control, I submitted, for the present, to the disappointment, resolving, at some future period, to make a voyage from the Broomielaw on purpose to take a survey of Greenock, and to note at leisure, as it behoves a traveller to do, the manners and customs of the inhabitants, together with the religious ceremonies and antiquities of

the place. Accordingly, having pacified my mind in this manner, I stayed in the steam-boat with the passengers that were bound for Helensburgh, until the Greenockians, with their bag and baggage, were put on the shore, which took place at the stairs forenent the customhouse. And here let me pause and make a remark for the benefit of persons intending to see foreign parts, to the effect that they should both read and enquire anent the places they purpose to see, before they depart, by which they will be enabled to regulate their course in a more satisfactory manner, than if they go away on such light hearsays, as I did in my first voyage.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER landing, as I have noticed, our cargo of Greenockians, the steam was again set to work, and the vessel, with all that orderliness and activity which belongs to the enginery, moved round, and, turning her latter end to Greenock, walked over the waters straight to Helensburgh. This is not a long voyage naturally, being no more than four miles, if so much ; but it is not without dangers ; and we had a lively taste and type of the perils of shipwreck in crossing the bank—a great shoal that lies midway in the sea ; for it happened that we were later for the tide than the captain had thought, so that, when we were in what the jack-tars call the mid-channel, the gallant Waterloo, that had come all the way from Glasgow like a swan before the wind, stuck fast in the mud. Never shall I forget the dunt that dirled on my heart when she stopped, and the engines would go no further. Fortunately, as I was told, this came to pass just at the turn of the tide, or otherwise there is no saying what the consequences might have been ; it being certain, that if the accident had happened an hour before, we should have been obligated to wait more than two hours, instead of half an hour ; and if, in the course of that time, a tempest had arisen, it is morally certain, the vessel lying high and dry, that the waves

would have beaten over her, and, in all human probability, dashed her to pieces, by which every soul on board would to a certainty have perished; for we were so far from land, both on the Greenock and the Helensburgh coast, that no help by boat or tackle could have been afforded. It was a dreadful situation, indeed, that we were in; and when I reflected on the fickleness of the winds, and the treachery of the seas, my anxieties found but a small comfort in the calm that was then in the air, and the glassy face of the sunny waters around us. However, I kept up my spirits, and waited for the flowing of the tide with as much composure as could reasonably be called for, from a man who had never been a venture at sea before, but had spent his days in a shop in the Saltmarket, as quietly as an hour-glass ebbing its sands in a corner.

While we were in this state, I fell into discourse with a sailor lad who had come home from Jamaica in the West Indies, and was going over from Greenock to see his friends, who lived at the Rue, on the Gairloch side; and falling into discourse, we naturally conversed about what might be the consequence of our lying on the bank, and if the vessel should chance to spring a leak, and such other concerns as, from less to more, led us on to talk of ships sinking in the great ocean, or taking fire thousands of miles from any land, and all those other storms and perils among which the lot of the mariner is cast. And I was expressing to him my amazement that ever any man who had been cast away, could afterwards think of going again to sea. "Ah!" said he; "for all that, the sailor's life is a heartsome life. If we risk limb and life, we are spared from the sneaking anxieties that make other men so shamefaced. Besides, sir, there is a pleasure in our dangers, and common suffering opens the generosity of the heart; so that, when we have little wherewith to help one another, we make up for it in kindness." I could not but wonder how this sailor lad had learned to speak in this style of language, and he satisfied me by telling me that his father had been a dominie, and that he had received a good education, to qualify him, please God, to take the command of a vessel. I then spoke to him very particularly about what he might have seen and met with in the course of his sea-

faring life, and so led him on to relate, as follows, an account of a hurricane, by which the ship that he was in was lost, and every soul on board, save himself, a dog, and a black fellow, perished.

THE HURRICANE.

We were going up (said he) from Trinidad to St Kitts, in as fine weather as ever was seen in the heavens, and we expected to make a brisk passage; but, in the third night after our departure, about the middle of the second watch, the wind fell on a sudden dead calm—I was on deck at the time—every one was surprised—for it had been blowing a steady breeze till that moment. It had, however, been noticed the night before, that the cat was freaking about, and climbing the rigging with a storm in her tail—a sign which is never known to fail.

Towards morning, the air in the West Indies becomes lighter and fresher; but in that night, we observed, it grew close and sultry, and about sunrise the heat was very heavy—yet the sky was clear, not a speck of cloud to be seen—the sea, however, was discoloured, as at the mouth of a river. An old man-of-war's man whom we had on board, one Thomas Buoy, who had been in the *Ramilies* when the *Ville de Paris* went down, was very uneasy at these signs, and said they reminded him of the weather before that hurricane.

All day the dead calm and the oppressive heat continued, but still over-head the heavens were bright. About noon, however, just as we had taken an observation, Thomas bade me notice a sort of smoky haze spreading round the horizon. "I don't like that," said he; nor did I either, although I had no reason on my part. At sunset, this vapour had thickened in the west into two or three strips of black cloud—some of the men thought they betokened rain and thunder. "And wind too," said Thomas Buoy, as he walked the deck thoughtfully. However, the night set in as beautiful as ever. Every star in the firmament was out, beaming like the lamp in the binnacle; but, for all that, the dead calm and the sultry air lay heavy on the spirits of all on board, and the ship was a log on the water.

About half a glass before midnight, the man at the helm saw a fire-ball at the mainmast head, and in a short time another on the foremast. When the watch was changed, there was one at each mast-head. Some of the sailors had seen such lights before, without harm following, but nobody liked them.

During the watch, the men were not so cheerful as usual, as I heard in the morning, and Thomas Buoy kept himself aloof, and was frequently heard to say, "God help us!" The mate had that night come suddenly on deck, terrified out of his sleep by a dream, in which he thought he saw a large black Newfoundland dog come down into the captain's state-room, and run off with him in his teeth. But the daylight came round, and the weather for a time was finer than ever; a breeze sprang up, and the ship went at a brave rate, but Thomas Buoy remarked that the skies were streaked with flakes of goat's-hair, and said the wind was not yet come. At noon, he pointed out to the captain a small round black cloud in the north-west, which he solemnly said was the eye of a hurricane. Every other vapour changed its shape and hue but that cloud—It was fixed; and, as Thomas said, looked at us with vengeance. Towards the evening it began to alter, and gradually to spread, until the whole heaven, from the south-west to the north, was filled with the dark and rolling omens of a thunder-storm and tempest. The wind frequently veered from one point to another, and every now and then came out with a sudden puff, as if the devil had been fetching his breath. We prepared for the worst—took in sail, and struck the topgallant masts. About an hour after sunset, it began to lighten fiercely along the horizon, but we heard no thunder.

This confirmed the fears of Thomas Buoy. "It is now gathering," said he; "these flashes are Beelzebub's rockets, thrown up as signals for action." Surely the old man felt the hand of fate upon him, for all his apprehensions were confirmed.

The wind, as the night darkened, came on gusty and rougher—now it blew a steady breeze from the north; but in a moment there was a pause, and then a squall came roaring from the west, as if all the trade-winds that were blowing from the east since the last hurricane, had been furiously driven back. Still

the hand of mercy struggled with the tempest; and it was not till midnight that it came flapping forth with all its wings, in the dreadful license of full liberty.

As we were all snug aloft, the captain, who was a steady seaman—poor fellow, a better never trode on oak—ordered the watch to be kept as usual, that, in case of accidents, the men might come fresh to their duty, but few of us turned in. The mate sat with Thomas, listening to what he had suffered on board the *Ramilies*, and hearing the howls of the hurricane above. While he was in one of the wildest passages of his old stories, a sheet of lightning struck the mizzen, and the whole party declared, that in the same moment they saw something in the likeness of a large black Newfoundland dog, such as the mate had seen in his dream, run past them, as it were from the hold, and escape upon deck. The mizzen topmast was rent into splinters, and the captain was so wounded in the head by one of the pieces, that I assisted to carry him to his cot.

We were now driving along at the mercy of the wind, which was blowing so strong, sweeping round the compass like a whirlpool, that the ocean was flying all spindrift. In this state we continued three hours, till, in a sudden checking round of a squall, a sea broke on board, which carried away the boats, the binnacle, two men at the helm, and every thing on deck that was not a part of the ship. She was almost upset by the shock; and we found, when we expected that she would have righted from the lurch, the cargo had shifted, by which the rudder was rendered useless—and still the hurricane was increasing.

The daylight began at last to dawn, but the air was so thick, that we could not see across the deck; and, but that we knew from the force of the wind, that the vessel must be going, and that, too, at a great rate, no one on board could say she was in motion.

About two hours after sunrise, we saw, on the larboard side, something vast and dark, through the spindrift; at first we took it for a line-of-battle ship lying to, but in a moment Thomas Buoy clapped his hands in despair, and cried, "The land! the land!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when the ship

struck with such force, that all her masts were started. The cry was then, "Cut away!" but in an instant she struck again, and the masts were thrown overboard. The third shock did her business;—she gave, as it were, a deep groan, and, hogging up in midships, yawned asunder by the main hatchway, her stern sinking into the water with the poor captain in his cot, and all the brave fellows who were at the moment at the mizzen chains, cutting away the rigging.

I happened at the time to be on the forecastle; and, looking a-head, saw that the bowsprit reached to the rocks. I called on all to follow me; and, running out at once, got safe to the cliff; but in the same moment, the wreck lurched over, and filling, went down with all the crew, except a black fellow, whom the captain had brought as steward from Trinidad, and a little dog that he was taking as a present to a lady at St Thomas's.—How the dog escaped I cannot tell, for he was on the land before me; but the black fellow was like a sea-gull, and saved himself by swimming.

It seemed to me, that at the very time when we reached the shore, the gale slackened; for the air soon after became lighter, and I saw we were not far from a sugar plantation, all the mills and houses belonging to which were scattered like shingles and splinters.

Just as the sailor had got to this crisis of his story, the steam-boat began to move, and in the course of a minute or two she was paddling her way towards Helensburgh; and her motion made every body again so jocose and lively, that I could not but marvel at the depths of the mysteries of the heart of man. As we drew near to the shore, the sailor had forgotten all the earnest solemnity of his tale, and was the blithest in the boat. Fain would I have questioned him about the particulars of what ensued when he found himself in the plantation; but he was no longer in a humour to attend to me, his heart being taken up with the thought of getting to his friends—just like a young dog that has broken loose from a confinement; so that I was left in a kind of an unsatisfied state, with the image of the broken ship in my mind, with her riven planks and timbers, grinning like

the jaws of death amidst the raging waters; the which haunted me till I got a chack of dinner at the hotel, and a comfortable tumbler of excellent old double-rum toddy. But I should mention, that till the dinner was gotten ready, I had a pleasant walk along the shore, as far as the Cairn-dhue, and saw on the right hand, among its verdant plantations, the lordly castle of Ardingale, and on the left, ayont the loch, the modern mansion which the Duke of Argyle is building there among the groves of Roseneath; with which, it's my opinion, no situation in this country-side can compare, for hill and dale, and wood and water, and other comely and romantic incidents of Highland mountains, all rocky and fantastical, like a painted picture by some famous o'er-sea limner.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN I had ate my dinner and drunk my toddy at the pleasant hotel of Helensburgh, in which there are both hot and cold baths for invalid persons, and others afflicted with the rheumatics, and suchlike incomes, I went out again to take another walk, for I had plenty of time on my hands, as the steam-boat was not to sail for Glasgow till six o'clock. At first, it was my intent to take a survey of the country and agriculture, and to see what promise there was on the ground of a harvest; but in sauntering along the road towards the hill of Ardmore, I foregathered with Mr and Mrs M'Waft, and four of their childer. They had been for some time at Helensburgh for the salt water, the gudeman having been troubled with some inward complaint that sat upon his spirits, and turned all to sour that he ate or drank.

Nobody could be more glad to see an old acquaintance than they were to see me, and Mrs M'Waft was just in a perplexity to think that I could ever have ventured to leave my shop so long, and come such a voyage by myself; but I told her that I had been constrained by the want of health, and that maybe

before the summer was done she might see me again; for that I had got a vast of entertainment, and was, moreover, appetized to such a degree, that I had made a better dinner that day, and with a relish, than I had done for years past; which she was very happy to hear, hoping the like in time would be the lot of her gudeman, who was still in a declining way, though he took the salt water inwardly every morning, and the warm bath outwardly every other day. Thus, as we were standing in the road, holding a free-and-easy talking about our ails and concerns, and the childer were diverting themselves pu'ing the gowans and chasing the bees and butterflies, Mr M'Waft said that I could do no less than go back with them and take a glass of wine, and, insisting kindly thereon, I found myself obligated to do so; accordingly, I turned with them, and went into the house where they had their salt-water quarters.

It was one of the thackit houses near the burn—a very sweet place, to be sure, of its kind; but I could not help wondering to hear how Mr M'Waft ever expected to grow better in it, which, compared with his own bein house on the second flat of Pater-son's lan', was both damp and vastly inconvenient. The floor of the best room was clay, and to cover the naked walls they had brought carpets from home, which they hung round them like curtains, behind which carpets all sorts of foul clothes, shoes, and things to be kept out of sight, I could observe, were huddled.

Meanwhile, Mrs M'Waft had got out the wine and the glasses, and a loaf of bread that was blue moulded from the damp of the house; and I said to her, "that surely the cause which had such an effect on the bread, must be of some consequence to the body." "But the sea and country air," replied Mr M'Waft, "makes up for more than all such sort of inconveniences." So we drank our wine and conversed on divers subjects, rehearsing, in the way of a sketch, the stories related in my foregoing pages, which both the mistress and gudeman declared were as full of the extraordinaries as any thing they had ever heard of.

Mr M'Waft, when in his good health, as all his acquaintance well know, has a wonderful facetious talent at a story; and he was so much lightened with my narrations, that, after taking two

glasses of the red port, he began to tell an adventure he once met with in going to London on some matter of his muslin business, when one of the great cotton speculators, in the 1809, fell to the pigs and whistles.

THE WEARYFUL WOMAN.

It happened, said he, that there were in the smack many passengers, and among others a talkative gentlewoman of no great capacity, sadly troubled with a weakness of parts about her intellectuals. She was, indeed, a real weak woman; I think I never met with her like for weakness—just as weak as water. Oh, but she was a weak creature as ever the hand of the Lord put the breath of life in! and from morning to night, even between the bockings of the sea-sickness, she was aye speaking; nay, for that matter, it's a God's truth, that at the dead hour of midnight, when I happened to be wakened by a noise on the decks, I heard her speaking to herself for want of other companions; and yet for all that, she was vastly entertaining, and in her day had seen many a thing that was curious, so that it was no wonder she spoke a great deal, having seen so much; but she had no command of her judgment, so that her mind was always going round and round, and pointing to nothing, like a weathercock in a squally day.

“Mrs M'Adam,” quoth I to her one day, “I am greatly surprised at your ability in the way of speaking.” But I was well afflicted for the hypocritical compliment, for she then fastened upon me; and whether it was at meal-time or on the deck, she would come and sit beside me, and talk as if she was trying how many words her tongue could utter without a single grain of sense. I was for a time as civil to her as I could be; but the more civility I showed, the more she talked, and the weather being calm, the vessel made but little way. Such a prospect in a long voyage as I had before me!

Seeing that my civility had produced such a vexatious effect, I endeavoured to shun the woman, but she singled me out; and even when I pretended to be overwhelmed with the sickness,

she would sit beside me, and never cease from talking. If I went below to my bed, she would come down and sit in the cabin, and tell a thousand stories about remedies for the sea-sickness; for her husband had been a doctor, and had a great repute for skill. "He was a worthy man," quoth she, "and had a world of practice, so that he was seldom at home, and I was obligated to sit by myself for hours in the day, without a living creature to speak to, and obliged to make the iron tongs my companions, by which silence and solitude I fell into low spirits. In the end, however, I broke out of them, and from that day to this, I have enjoyed what the doctor called a cheerful fecundity of words; but when he, in the winter following, was laid up with the gout, he fashed at my spirits, and worked himself into such a state of irritation against my endeavours to entertain him, that the gout took his head, and he went out of the world like a pluff of powther, leaving me a very disconsolate widow; in which condition, it is not every woman who can demean herself with the discretion that I have done. Thanks be, and praise, however, I have not been tempted beyond my strength; for when Mr Pawkie, the seceder minister, came, shortly after the interment, to catch me with the tear in my e'e, I saw through his exhortations, and I told him upon the spot that he might refrain; for it was my intent to spend the remainder of my days in sorrow and lamentation for my dear deceased husband. Don't you think, sir, it was a very proper rebuke to the first putting forth of his cloven foot? But I had soon occasion to fear that I might stand in need of a male protector; for what could I, a simple woman, do with the doctor's bottles and pots, pills, and other doses, to say nothing of his brazen pestle and mortar, which of itself was a thing of value, and might be coined, as I was told, into a firLOT of farthings? not, however, that farthings are now much in circulation, the pennies and new bawbies have quite supplanted them, greatly, as I think, to the advantage of the poor folk, who now get the one or the other, where, in former days, they would have been thankful for a farthing; and yet, for all that, there is a visible increase in the number of beggars—a thing which I cannot understand—and far less thankfulness on their part than of old, when alms were given with a scantier

hand; but this, no doubt, comes of the spreading wickedness of the times. Don't you think so, sir? It's a mystery that I cannot fathom; for there was never a more evident passion for church-building than at present; but I doubt there is great truth in the old saying, 'The nearer the kirk the farther from grace,' which was well exemplified in the case of Provost Pedigree of our town, a decent man in his externals, and he keptit a hardware shop; he was indeed a merchant of 'a' things,' from a needle and a thimble down to a rake and a spade. Poor man! he ran at last a ram-race, and was taken before the session; but I had always a jealousy of him, for he used to say very comical things to me in the doctor's lifetime, not that I gave him any encouragement farther than in the way of an innocent joke, for he was a jocose and jocular man; but he never got the better of that exploit with the session, and, dwining away, died the year following of a decay, a disease for which my dear diseased husband used to say no satisfactory remedy exists in nature, except gentle laxatives, before it has taken root. But although I have been the wife of a doctor, and spent the best part of my life in the smell of drugs, I cannot say that I approve of them, except in a case of necessity, where, to be sure, they must be taken, if we intend the doctor's skill to take effect upon us; but many a word he and my dear deceased husband had about my taking of his pills, after my long affliction with the hypochondriacal affection, for I could never swallow them, but always gave them a check between the teeth, and their taste was so odious that I could not help spitting them out. It is indeed a great pity that the Faculty cannot make their nostrums more palatable; and I used to tell the doctor, when he was making up doses for his patients, that I wondered how he could expect sick folk, unable to swallow savoury food, would ever take his nauseous medicines, which he never could abide to hear, for he had great confidence in many of his prescriptions, especially a bolus of flour of brimstone and treacle for the cold, one of the few of his compounds I could ever take with any pleasure."

In this way, said Mr M'Waft, did that endless woman rain her words into my ear, till I began to fear that something like a gout would also take my head. At last I fell on a device, and,

lying in bed, began to snore with great vehemence, as if I had been sound asleep, by which, for a time, I got rid of her; but being afraid to go on deck lest she should attack me again, I continued in bed, and soon after fell asleep in earnest. How long I had slept I know not, but when I awoke, there she was chattering to the steward, whom she instantly left the moment she saw my eye open, and was at me again. Never was there such a plague invented as that woman; she absolutely worked me into a state of despair, and I fled from her presence as from a serpent; but she would pursue me up and down, back and fore, till every body aboard was like to die with laughing at us, and all the time she was as serious and polite as any gentlewoman could well be.

When we got to London, I was terrified she would fasten herself on me there, and therefore, the moment we reached the wharf, I leapt on shore, and ran as fast as I could for shelter to a public-house, till the steward had dispatched her in a hackney. Then I breathed at liberty—never was I so sensible of the blessing before, and I made all my acquaintance laugh very heartily at the story. But my trouble was not ended. Two nights after, I went to see a tragedy, and was seated in an excellent place, when I heard her tongue going among a number of ladies and gentlemen that were coming in. I was seized with a horror, and would have fled, but a friend that was with me held me fast; in that same moment she recognized me, and before I could draw my breath, she was at my side, and her tongue rattling in my lug. This was more than I could withstand, so I got up and left the playhouse. Shortly after, I was invited to dinner, and, among other guests, in came that afflicting woman, for she was a friend of the family. O Lord! such an afternoon I suffered—but the worst was yet to happen.

I went to St James's to see the drawing-room on the birthday, and among the crowd I fell in with her again, when, to make the matter complete, I found she had been separated from her friends. I am sure they had left her to shift for herself. She took hold of my arm as an old acquaintance, and humanity would not allow me to cast her off: but although I stayed till the end of the ceremonies, I saw nothing; I only heard the continual murmur of her words like the sound of a running river.

When I got home to my lodging, I was just like a demented man; my head was bizzing like a bees' skep, and I could hear of nothing but the birr of that wearyful woman's tongue. It was terrible; and I took so ill that night, and felt such a loss o' appetite and lack of spirit the next day, that I was advised by a friend to take advice; and accordingly, in the London fashion, I went to a doctor's door to do so; but just as I put up my hand to the knocker, there within was the wearyful woman in the passage, talking away to the servant-man. The moment I saw her I was seized with a terror, and ran off like one that has been bitten by a wud dog, at the sight and sound of running water. It is, indeed, not to be described what I suffered from that woman; and I met her so often, that I began to think she had been ordained to torment me; and the dread of her in consequence so worked upon me, that I grew frightened to leave my lodgings, and I walked the streets only from necessity, and then I was as a man hunted by an evil spirit.

But the worst of all was to come. I went out to dine with a friend that lives at a town they call Richmond, some six or eight miles from London, and there being a pleasant company, and me no in any terror of the wearyful woman, I sat wi' them as easy as you please, till the stage-coach was ready to take me back to London. When the stage-coach came to the door, it was empty, and I got in; it was a wet night, and the wild blew strong, but, tozy wi' what I had gotten, I laid mysel' up in a corner, and soon fell fast asleep. I know not how long I had slumbered, but I was awakened by the coach stopping, and presently I heard the din of a tongue coming towards the coach. It was the wearyful woman; and before I had time to come to mysel', the door was opened, and she was in, chatting away at my side, the coach driving off.

As it was dark, I resolved to say nothing, but to sleep on, and never heed her. But we hadna travelled half a mile, when a gentleman's carriage going by with lamps, one of them gleamed on my face, and the wearyful woman, with a great shout of gladness, discovered her victim.

For a time, I verily thought that my soul would have leapt out at the crown of my head like a vapour; and when we got

to a turn of the road where was a public-house, I cried to the coachman for Heaven's sake to let me out, and out I jumped. But O waes me! That deevil thought I was taken ill, and as I was a stranger, the moment I was out and in the house, out came she likewise, and came talking into the kitchen, into which I had ran, perspiring with vexation.

At the sight, I ran back to the door, determined to prefer the wet and wind on the outside of the coach to the clatter within. But the coach was off, and far beyond call. I could have had the heart, I verily believe, to have quenched the breath of life in that wearyful woman; for when she found the coach was off without us, her alarm was a perfect frenzy, and she fastened on me worse than ever—I thought my heart would have broken.

By and by came another coach, and we got into it. Fortunately two young London lads, clerks or siclike, were within. They endured her tongue for a time, but at last they whispered each other, and one of them giving me a nodge or sign, taught me to expect they would try to silence her. Accordingly the other broke suddenly out into an immoderate daft-like laugh that was really awful. The mistress paused for a minute, wondering what it could be at; anon, however, her tongue got under way, and off she went; presently again the younker gave another gaffaw, still more dreadful than the first. His companion, seeing the effect it produced on Madam, said, "Don't be apprehensive, he has only been for some time in a sort of deranged state; he is quite harmless, I can assure you." This had the desired effect, and from that moment till I got her safe off in a hackney coach from where the stage stoppit, there was nae word out of her head; she was as quiet as pussy, and cowered in to me in terrification o' the madman breaking out. I thought it a soople trick o' the Londoners. In short, said Mr M'Waft, though my adventures with the wearyful woman is a story now to laugh at, it was in its time nothing short of a calamity.

By the telling of his adventure, which he acted to the life, Mrs M'Waft said, she had seen a better symptom in his health than had before kithed; we therefore all agreed, that there was a wholesome jocundity of spirit to be earned by seeing the world, although at the same time there might be both peril and hardship endured.

Having been thus solaced by the wine and adventures of Mr M'Waft, I rose to take my leave, the steam-boat, with her pinnet of smoke, being in sight. The mistress would have me to stay and take an early cup of tea, but I was afraid that I might lose my passage; so I bade them farewell—and, going down to the shore, reached the pier in time to get into the jolly-boat with the first cargo of passengers.

The voyage from Helensburgh to Greenock afforded us no sort of adventures; the passengers were Glasgow folk, on the retour, and, of course, their talk was all anent themselves and their neighbours, and no the best entertainment to a stranger—which I think must be owing to their great neglect of edifying communion:—but this is an observe that I have made on the intellectual state of my fellow-citizens since I began, in my voyages and travels, to mess and mell more with the generality of mankind.

Our passage to the Customhouse quay of Greenock consumed about twenty minutes—a space of time that in no reason could be expected to bring forth any thing by the common, unless the vessel had sprung a leak, or the boiler been blown into the air, or any other peril of navigation had befallen us—from all of which we were happily spared.

At Greenock we taiglet a lucky hour, in which I tyn't my patience, for the man in the ship was aye saying they would be off in a minute; but minute after minute trintled by, till the whole hour had rolled entirely away. Had I known or foreseen that this was to chance, I would have employed myself in visiting some of the curiosities of the town. It was, however, a new thing to be in the number of “honest travellers by sea and land,” and that, I suppose, was the cause which made me, while we lay at the Customhouse quay of Greenock, not altogether so well satisfied as I might otherwise have been.

At long and length, the man having trumpeted his last call, the vessel began to bestir herself, and paddled away towards Port-Glasgow. In this passage, which took up a full quarter of an hour, we encountered nothing particular; but we had received an augmentation of passengers, some of whom were folk belong-

ing to "the Port," seemingly creditable well-doing bodies, but of an auld-fashioned cut, and, I jealouse, no excessive customers to the cloth-merchant. I say not this, however, out of ony hankering of mind because I happen to be in that line myself, but altogether as a natural observe for a traveller to make upon them.

CHAPTER V.

HAVING landed the Port-Glasgow bodies, I inspected my fellow-passengers with an inquisitive eye, in order to discover who among them was likely to prove the most instructive companion; and after a careful perusal of their externals, I made choice of a young man, with a fair complexion, coarse hempen hair, a round face, and eyes of a light blue colour; and I soon learnt by his tongue, which was a broken English, that he was of a foreign stock. But not to summer and winter on this fact, I may just at once say that he was a Norseman from Norway, who had been at Greenock, to open a correpondence about deals, and hemp, and iron, and the other commodities that abound, as he informed me, in all the countries circumjacent to the Baltic sea, from the Neva of Petersburg, and from Riga, where the balsam comes from so good for cutted fingers and inward bruises.

At first we held a loose kind of preliminary interlocutory concerning the views on the Clyde around us, the which he declared were of a surpassing beauty; and really it is not in the power of nature to do more for any landscape than she did on that pleasant evening. The heavens were hung, as it were, with curtains of visible glory; the hills were glowing like opal and amethyst; and the sea that we were sailing was as a lake of molten gold, showing within its bosom another heaven and another earth, between and which, the steam-boat was bearing us along like a mighty bird through the tranquillity of the mid-air. "I have seen nothing like this," said the Norseman, "since I was at Spitzbergen;" and then proceeded to relate to me the

following story of his adventures in that desert island—all which I have set down, word for word, as he spoke the same to me:—

SPITZBERGEN.

Two year gone past I had much time and nothing to do; and having an affection for the strange things of nature, I volunteered in my own mind to go for pleasures of the chase to Spitzbergen. For this purpose I did hire a small ship vit two mast, at Gottenburgh, and sailed vit her round to the North Cape. It was the first week in June then, and we had such fine weather that the sea was all as one great field of smooth oil.—It was as calm as ice.

At the North Cape I went on shore to the land, where there is plenty of birds to shoot; and when I was gone up the hill vit my gon, the tide went away and left my ship on a great stone, by which her bottom was much wounded, and the water came in. The sailors, however, when I had come back, did not tell me of this adversity, but permitted me to sail for Spitzbergen vit a hole in the bottom, which was very bad of tem; for if they had not done so, I would have gone to the pole. By the living heavens, sir, I would have gone to the pole—there was nothing to stop me; for I saw from one high hill in Spitzbergen, when we were arrived there, all the sea clear to the nort. Oh, so beautiful it was! There was no more to stop me from going to the pole than there is now, if I had the wings, from flying up to yonder cloud, which is like one balcony for the little angels to look down upon us in the steam-boat moving on the glass of this silent water.

Very well; we went away vit the tide, and we came to one part of Spitzbergen where we saw the great rocks of the coal. There is the coal for all the world, when you can find no more in this country; and there is likewise the trunks of trees which come in the corrents of the ocean, and are piled up in the bays by the portorage, that is, by what you call the lifting up of the waves. My Got! what values of woods be there, all broken in the bays of Spitzbergen!

Very well; we sailed alongside the coast, and there we came

to one estuary opening into the bowels of the land, and I made the sailors to navigate into the same, and went in and in, more than seventy-five mile, and were not arrived at the sack-end. It may cut the country to the other side, for I do not know that it does not. There is no corrent when you have passed by one little strait—the purse-mouth of the place; and therefore I do think myself it does not cut the country to the other side, but is one firth like this wherein we are now taking our pleasures.

Very well; we came back to anchor in that estuary, under a rock all covered vit the lichen plant; it was as if the stones were beginning to grow into the civilization of a soil, and to yield the food for the sheep and the cows that go about the farms, making the fields so riant and merry vit life. But no sheep nor cows ruminate in Spitzbergen, only grand troops of reindeer—and such thousands of the eider ducks; no man can reckon what thousands be there of eider ducks; and then upon the shore in the bays, there be likewise such number of the morse, vit their red eyes, tam brutes—how they did roll their red eyes at me, when I one day came into a creek where they were on the shore, hundreds of them all together! I fired my gon, and they rushed into the deep water—my Got! how the tam brutes, vit their red eyes, did splash in the water! They were like three thousand paddles of the steam-boat, all going at one time from the same momentum. It would be one rich thing to go to those bays in Spitzbergen, where the morse sleeps, tam brutes, and close them in on all sides softly, vitout disturbing them in their composure. I have formed a fine speculation for going there some one day, vit a contrivance that I have made the idea of in my brain, by which I vill kill, in one season, tree thousand morse—ay more than tree thousand morse, tam brutes—how I would have the satisfaction in killing tem all!

But though there be much game for the pleasures at Spitzbergen, it is one serious, one grave place. I do not mean a churchyard; but, as you would say, a country so empty of living noises, that it is only fit for death, and not for life to be. There was no night while I was there; but the time to be awake, and the time to be asleep, was marked out by nature in one dreadful manner; more thrice dreadful it did seem to me than is the dark

night, vit the thunder in the cloud, and the fire spouting from a black sky. The sun went round about the hills, as if in quest of a place to set, and found none—then he did rise up again when he was low down, almost at the bottom of the hill. That was the point of concordance vid midnight, when the solemnity of the air was palpable to mine ear. One time, when I had fallen asleep on the rocks, I happened to awake at that time—I was then alone—solitary—all by myself—in a dumb valley, where there was no stream for the eider duck, nor any little thing that makes the sound on the earth. It was a strange silence to feel in the sunshine—Oh, it was a cold silence, and it made me to cower into myself, as if one dead man had come out of his niche in the clay, and put his hand of earth upon my bosom. But when it is the time to be awake, then there is a noise and charm in the air—birds fly—the eider ducks come in clouds—the reindeer jump vit the gladness of renewed strength, and the morse on the shore—tam brutes—open their red eyes.

Very well; I must now tell you of mine adventure, and what made me to say that this beautiful evening on the Clyde is like the lovely stillness that I saw in Spitzbergen.

I went vit my gon to shoot the reindeer and the eider duck, and I was alone, and nobody vit me upon the silent hills; and I went up to the top, the crown of the head of one high mountain, which rose like a pyramid over many other steeple hills; and from that place I saw the ocean all clear—not an iceberg in the horizon—all was open towards the pole. By the living heavens! had the pole been one mast, I could have seen it myself that day; the air was so like nothing between me and where it is.

Very well; while I was sitting there by myself, like the last man of the world, all other men being dead, and no motion stirring, and sound become dumb as death, I turned mine eyes to one little creek below, and there I discovered a ship at anchor. I had the rejoicing palpitations in mine heart when I saw that vessel; and, leaving my meditations on the top of the mountain, I went down towards her; but, as I came nearer and nearer, a strange fear came upon me, and I could not think what the ship could be doing there. She had a wild appearance—few of her ropes were fastened—they hung dangling like men

that are put into chains for justice; and her sails were loose and full of holes, like the old scutcheons in the tombs of the Dukes of Housenstadt in Hungaria.

But I made my heart big, and went on till I could see that the ship had been anchored there a long time—many years—all was so weather-worn about her. Her seams gaped like hunger, and her cordage was like the old trees that are furred with the lichen plant. As I was standing there, looking at her, and thinking where all her seamen had gone, I saw eleven little mounds on the shore, and at the head of each there was a cross, set up for a sign to show they were the tomb-beds of Christian peoples. I was made cold by seeing this, and, looking round, I discovered in the lea of a hollow rock one small hut, almost in ruin. The foxes of the mountain had made a hole through the roof. I went to it, and, forcing open the door, entered it. It was more dreadful than a sepulchre; for there lay the bones of a dead man. His head had been pulled off by the tam foxes, and lay some distance from what had been his body. There was at his side four, five, seven muskets loaded; a pitcher vit rye meal in it, and another pitcher vit some water. While I was looking at this spectrum, there came some one behind me and laid his hand on my shoulder——

Here the Norseman's tale was broken by the engine stopping. We had reached, while he was thus conversing, Bowling Bay, where it behoved him, on affairs of business, to leave the steam-boat, he having an expectation of a vessel coming through the canal from Grangemouth; with iron and deals from the Baltic. Fain would I have heard the rest of his story; but no persuasion of mine could make him come on to Glasgow, so I was obligated to submit to the disappointment with as resigned a temper as I could exercise; and I could not but on this occasion liken travelling in a steam-boat to the life of temporal man, where our joys are cut off in the fruition, and adversity comes upon us like a cloud, or a frost that nips the bud in the blowing. So I sat in this frame of mind, pondering on the uncertain pleasures of this life, and looking with an eye of compassion on the stately houses and plantations that our principal merchants and manu-

facturers have built on high and pleasant places, thicker and thicker, till they are lost in the smoke and confusion of our Tarshish; for verily, from all that I can read, hear, and understand, the city of Glasgow is waxen like Tyre of old, where traders are like princes.

Between nine and ten o'clock, I found myself safe and sound once more in the comfortable house of Mrs M'Lecket in the Saltmarket, having been absent near to fifteen hours, in the compass of which I had travelled by sea full eight-and-forty miles; and so well pleased was I with what I had seen and learned, that I told the mistress it was my design to make another voyage, the which she highly approved, and said there was a visible sunburnt alteration in my look, that showed how well travelling agreed with my constitution. We had then a bit of supper in our wonted familiarity together, and in due season retired to our respective rests.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN I had resided at home the space of four weeks, having much solacing of mind in reflecting on the adventures of my first voyage, I began to feel an onset to a new motion working within me, which every day gathered strength, and in the end came to a head, in my going forth a second time from the obscurities of the Saltmarket, and the manufacturing smokes and smells of Glasgow, to enjoy the hilarity of the sparkling waters of the summer sea, and the blitheness of the hills and of all living things, in the seasonable brightness and gladness which was then shining from the heavens, and glittering upon the earth.

I thought I had now acquired an experience in voyaging for pleasure, by what I noticed in my first ploy of that kind; so I told Mrs M'Lecket that I would go by the very earliest steam-boat in the morning, and as the *Britannia* was to sail at six o'clock, she need not rise to boil the kettle, for it was my intent

to enjoy myself by taking my breakfast in the steward's room with the other passengers ; indeed, I was chiefly egged on to do this by my neighbour Mr Sweeties, who, upon my exhortation, had, soon after my return, taken his diversion by a voyage to Greenock likewise, and partaken of a most comfortable meal in that way. But the progeny of the schemes of man are not in his own hands ; and though I had got a degree of insight as to the manner of setting about an embarkation, I found that I had really gone out with too much confidence in the strength of my own knowledge.

It was such an early hour that the steward, not counting on any body wanting to breakfast till they would reach Greenock, had made no provision of provender ; so that when I went to him, as caigie as a pyet picking at a worm, to enquire when the eggs would be boiled, judge of my mortification to hear that there was to be no breakfasting that morning, which disappointment, with the natural vapours of the river's tide, caused me to remember the judicious observe of Mrs M'Lecket, that there was a danger in going on the water with an empty stomach. However, I had put some gingerbread nuts in my pocket, and by the use of them the wind was keepit off my heart, and I suffered less from the effect than might have been expected.

But though this in its kind was an adversity that I had not foreseen, I sustained another which, in my opinion, in its season was far greater. The major part of the passengers had not been accustomed to rise so soon in the morning, and some of them had been up late ayont the night ; in short, we were all oorie, and scant in our intercourse towards one another, so that for the greater portion of the way there was little communion practicable among us, and what was, could not be said to have that cordiality with which I was in the fain expectation of meeting. We had sailed, indeed, as far as Blitheswood's new house before any kind of an awakened sociality began to sprout ; and I was beginning to fear that an undertaking so unsatisfactory at the outset would afford but small pleasure in the progress, and be found wanting in the end. However, at that point things took a turn to the better ; and I fell into conversation with a Yankee man from America, that had been at Glasgow, laying in goods

for his store in the city of Philadelphia. He was surely a man of great wisdom and experience in the world, according to his own account; and from what he said of the United States, they can be little short of the kingdom of heaven, except in the matter of religion, of which I could discern, taking him for a swatch, the Americans have but a scanty sprinkling, and that no of the soundest grace. Indeed, anent this I had heard something before; but the Yankee was a testificator by his discourse to the veracity of the information.

Our conversation was for a time of that jointless and purposeless kind that is commonly at the beginning of an acquaintance; but it took a more settled course as we proceeded onward, and at last ran into a regular stream, like a river that has its fountain-head up among the moors and mosses. What chiefly occasioned this sedate currency of the Yankee's words, was an observe of mine regarding the beauty of the prospects that the hand of nature was setting before us at every turn of the navigation—all which the American man slighted as a commodity in its kind of no value, saying that the views in his country were of a more excellent quality, being on a greater scale; and he laughed outright when I directed his attention to the Mare's Tail, that bonny waterfall near Finlayston House, which I should have mentioned in my first voyage, had I then noticed it. This drew on to some account of things that he had seen; and then he told me that he was well known throughout "all the States" by the name of Deucalion of Kentucky—a title which was bestowed upon him in consequence of being the sole survivor of a town that was washed away by a deluge. His description of this calamity it behoves me to give as nearly as possible in his own words; indeed, as I have already said, I find myself possessed of a felicitous fecundity in writing down the recollections of what I heard; but my pen is afflicted with a costive impediment when I try to eik out or enlarge upon the same. And it is this peculiar gift that emboldens me, along with the strenuous counselling of that discerning man, Mr Sweeties, to send forth my voyages and travels in this manner to the republic of letters—the only sort of republic that I entertain any pure

respect for, notwithstanding the laudatory descant of the Yankee man's on that of "the States."

DEUCALION OF KENTUCKY.

My grandfather was one of the first settlers of Kentucky. He was, by profession, a miller, and built a flour-mill at a village in that state. It was called Thyatira, after one of the ancient towns mentioned in the Bible; and he and his neighbours, the founders, expected it would become a great city; but not a vestige of it, neither of the church nor mill, now remains—yet I remember it all well. It was a handsome place, situated at the bottom of a range of hills wooded to the top; a fine stream washed their feet, and the mill stood at the side of a pretty waterfall.

My grandfather left his property in a flourishing condition to my father, who was an enterprising character. He took an active part in the war for the independence; and when the peace was adjusted he returned to Thyatira, where he enlarged the old flour-mill, and constructed another for sawing the timber with which the neighbouring mountains were covered. Every body predicted that my father would soon be one of the richest men in the state, and his prospects were certainly undeniable.

I think it is not possible that I shall ever see again a place half so beautiful as the unfortunate Thyatira, and the valley which it overlooked. The valley was green; the stream was clear; and the woods that clothed the mountains were of the loftiest kind and the richest leaf. All is now desolate! Sometimes of a night, as I came across the Atlantic, I thought the bell of the little wooden church, that stood on the slope above the village, rang in my ear, and I heard the dogs, as it were, bark again, and the cocks crow; but the ship would give a lurch and turn my eyes outwards upon the ocean waters all around me, as lone and wild as the deluge that destroyed my native valley.

In the summer before the dreadful yellow fever broke out in

Philadelphia—I was in that city at the time when the fever raged, which makes me remember it so well—my father was much troubled by the failure of the stream which supplied his mill. The drought dried it up, and his wheels stood still for want of water. Some of the old neighbours had visited the source of the river in their youth. It was a lake far up among the mountains; and my father, being a bold and enterprising character, thought, if he could enlarge the opening at the banks of the lake, where the stream issued, he would obtain an abundance of water.

The scheme was feasible; and he engaged a number of men to go with him to the lake for that purpose. I was then a youth, fond of any adventure, and I accompanied the heroes of the pickaxe and shovel. We had a cheerful journey through the woods; we startled showers of beautiful humming-birds; they were like apple-blossoms scattered in the winds; we slept at night in the woods, and we crossed several ancient Indian war-tracks, which we knew by their inscriptions on the rocks; we saw also in the forests artificial mounds, on which trees of the oldest growth were growing. They were the works of inhabitants before the present race—perhaps they were antediluvian. Sometimes I think America is the old world that was destroyed. But be that as it may, it contains many remains of an antiquity that philosophy has not yet explained. The warfare belts of the Indians are hieroglyphical chronicles. The Egyptians wrote in that language. Did they teach the Indians? Not, however, to dwell on such abstruse matters, I shall just say, that we reached on the second day the lake which supplied the stream. It was about some ten miles long and five broad—a bowl in the midst of several hills. It was overlooked by the woods and mountains; but towards our valley a vast embankment gave it the form of a dam, over the middle of which the stream of Thyatira flowed.

It was the evening when we reached the top of the embankment, we took some refreshment, and my father proposed that we should rest ourselves for that night;—the whole business partook of the nature of a hunting excursion;—our end was

labour, but we sweetened the means with pleasure. Accordingly, after our repast, the party severally betook themselves to the sports in which they most delighted. I retired to a rock that overlooked the lake, and seated myself to view the landscape, that, in the lone magnificence of mountain, lake, and wood, was spread around me. The spirit of the place held communion with mine, and I was seized with an awful foreboding. Tranquillity floated like a corpse on the water; silence sat in the dumbness of death on the mountains; the woods seemed, as the light faded, to take the form of hearse-plumes; and as I looked down towards my native village, I thought of the valley of Jehoshaphat and the day of judgment. What curious sense of the mind, keener than the eye, and quicker than the ear, gave me in that evening the foretaste of what was to happen?

The rest of the party slept well, but I durst not close my eyes. The moment I did so, the ever restless faculty of my spirit discovered the omens of what was to ensue, and frightened me awake. It is amazing how such things happen;—for my part, I think the mind never sleeps, and that our dreams are but the metaphorical medium of its reflections, when the five physical senses are shut up. Dreams, I would say, are but the metaphors in which reason thinks. But the mysteries of the kingdom of the soul are more dark and profound than those of all the other kingdoms of nature; and I cannot expound them.

At daybreak my father called us cheerily to work. I know not by what impulse I was actuated. I had been educated by a strange man—a deep classical scholar, who had settled at Thyatira. He had been brought up at Oxford, and he ascribed living powers to all organized existences. The woods were to him endowed with spirits, the streams had intelligence, and the rocks the memory of witnesses bearing testimony. These fancies came thick upon me, and I went to my father, and laid my hand on his arm. “Forbear, father,” said I; “there may be something unhallowed in disturbing the ancient channel of these holy waters.” My father laughed and again struck his pickaxe into the mound. It was a fatal stroke, for, as he pulled

out the weapon, the ground gave, as it were, a shudder, and presently after a groan was heard, as if the whole mound of earth was breaking up.

My father, by the last stroke of his pickaxe, had cleft asunder an incrustation of sand, that formed, as it were, the bowl of the lake. The water rushed through, and widened the seam with great violence. The mound, which dammed up the lake, had been formed by a gradual accumulation of fallen timber. The water through the rent insinuated itself among the mass; the mud and sand between the gathered trunks were washed away, and the mass lost its adhesion. In the course of a few minutes, Heaven knows by what strange aptitude, the stupendous mound began to move. It became convulsed; it roared with the throes of tearing asunder; the waters of the lake boiled up from the bottom; I ran from the spot; my father and his friends stood aghast and terrified; birds rose screaming from the woods below; I called to my father, and to all, for God's sake to follow me; I looked towards the lake—it seemed to me as if its calm level surface was taking the shape of sloping glass; I caught hold of the branch of a tree which grew on the rock where I had contemplated the scene the preceding evening; I felt as it were the globe of the world sliding from under my feet; I exerted myself; I reached the rock; every thing was reeling around me; I saw the hills and woods moving away. I shut my eyes in terror, and, covering my face with my hands, stretched myself on the rock, as if I lay at the feet of the angel of destruction. I heard a sound louder than thunder, and my senses were for a time stunned. What in the mean time happened I know not; but when I had fortitude enough to look around, I found myself on the ledge of an awful precipice—a black and oozy valley, herbless as a grave, where the lake had been; and for the mound where I had left my father and his labourers, a horrible chasm—devastation, horsed on the roaring deluge, was seen raging down the valley towards Thyatira. The sound lessened as I looked, and a silence succeeded, such as the raven of Noah found upon the earth, when she went forth, banqueting on the abolished races of the old world.

The Yankee man was much affected as he related this desolation; and in telling it his voice had a fearful haste, that hurried on my fancy till I was almost a partaker in the grief and consternation that possessed his memory; insomuch, that I was thankful when the vessel reached the quay of Port-Glasgow, where I went on shore to take my breakfast at an inn, being resolved to leave her there, and to travel by myself on to Greenock, which is situated about three miles to the westward. This determination, as it proved, was most judicious on my part; for I found a comfortable house, and great civility in the attendance, facing the shipping in the harbour, with excellent warm rolls, piping hot from the baker's, and fresh herring that would have been a treat at any time. Judge then, courteous reader, what they were to me, appeased as I was by a voyage of nearly twenty miles without breaking my fast! Truly scandalous is the byword that says, "There's nothing good in Port-Glasgow."

When, with the help of the dainties at the inns, I had pacified the craving of nature within me, I walked out to inspect the curiosities of the place, and to make my remarks on the inhabitants. I cannot, however, honestly say, that I saw a great deal to occasion any thing like an admiration. The waiter, to be sure, as his wont doubtless is with all strangers, directed my attention to the steeple, telling me that it was higher than the Greenock one; but we have so many handsome steeples in Glasgow, it could not reasonably be expected that this of "the Port" would be regarded by me as any very extraordinary object. One thing, however, I ascertained completely to my satisfaction, which is, that the story of its being crooked is not correct, although, in the matter of the general edifice, there may be a foundation for the report; that building being bevelled to the shape of the street, and erected in an a-jee style, has no doubt given rise to the misrepresentation. Upon the which I would remark, that we have, in this instance, an example how careful and precise travellers should be in publishing their descriptions; for it has been a sore heart to the worthy people of Port-Glasgow to think it is a received opinion in the great world, that their beautiful steeple is lout-shouldered, when, in fact, it is only the townhouse that is lap-sided.

When I had satisfied my curiosity relative to all the particulars concerning this renowned structure, I visited the dry dock, a very useful place for maritime purposes of various sorts, especially for repairing vessels' bottoms; and then I went to investigate that famous antiquity, the old Castle; and, in turning back towards the public, I saw several of the inhabitants at their shop-doors, and some elderly characters standing forenent the inns, waiting for the London papers. Upon the whole, they appeared to be a hamely race; and the town, like all small places of little note in the way of business, seemed to have but few young men, and what they had were not of a sort calculated to make a figure in description. As for the houses, they are built in various styles of architecture, and few of them have been erected within the last ten or twenty years; so that it cannot be said the town has actually fallen into a habitude of decay. But I should conjecture that the population cannot be greatly on the increase.

By the time I had gone my rounds, and come back to the inns, there was a noddie at the door bound for the town of Greenock; so, being somewhat tired with my itinerancy, I stepped into it, where I found a brave young lass going the same road. At first this gave me no concern; but when the noddie began to move, I remembered the story of my deceased worthy old neighbour and brother of the trade, James Hillan, who had his shop at the corner of the Saltmarket, entering "aboone the Cross," and I began to grow, as it were, uneasy.

JAMES HILLAN AND THE YOUNG WOMAN.

James Hillan was a very worthy man, both creditable and well respectit, but of a kindly simplicity of manner. In his time there was not such an orderly fashion in the art of shop-keeping as there is now-a-days: we neither fashed ourselves with 'prentices, nor with journal books and ledgers, but just had one in which we entered all our counts of credit; and when the customers that took on with us paid what they were owing, we serapit out the debt. In this fashion James, and Mrs Hillan

his wife, keepit their cloth shop, the which being in under the pillars that were then round the buildings of the Cross, had no glass window, but only an open door, which, when James and the mistress went home to their own house in the Stockwell, at meal-time, was always locked.

It happened one evening, that, as her wont was, Mrs Hillan steppit home a short time before her gudeman, to have the tea masket by the time he would come; and as James was setting bye the tartans and plaidings that stood at the door-cheek for a sign and show, a kintra wife drew up to buy something. "Come in, young woman," said James, for that was his manner of salutation to all ages of the female sex. "Come in," said he, "and steek the door," meaning the half-door, a convenience which, like many other good old fashions, has gone down; and over which, in his shop, I have often stood, to see the lords coming in, and the magistrates drinking the king's health on the birthday, at the Cross. So in came the customer, but, no being acquaintit with the manner of shop-doors, as James was looting down behind the counter to lift up what she wanted, she shut the mickle door upon them, and there they were, the two innocent souls, in the dark by themselves. "Hey!" quoth James, "but it's grown suddenly dark—we maun get a candle;" and with that he came round the counter to where the carlin was standing. "Hey! what's this, young woman?" cried he; "what gart you shut the door?" and with that he flew till't, with a panting heart, and found the lock-bolt was almost shotten. "Think what might have been the consequence if it had gane in a' thegither, and me obliged to cry to the neighbours, to let me and the young woman out of the dark shop," said James, as he used to tell the tale in his jocose manner.

So I thought of this story as I was nodding away to Greenock beside the Port-Glasgow lass; but by-and-by another passenger came in, and we arrived safe and sound.

I observed on the road as we travelled along, that the young ladies of "the Port" were all going Greenock-ward; and no doubt they had reasons, well-known to themselves, for seeking that direction, dressed out in their best; and I could not avoid

reflecting that this tribute of her beauties which Port-Glasgow pays to Greenock is an absolute acknowledgment of her inferiority, and it naturally led me to expect, what indeed I found in reality, a very different sort of a town; for in Greenock there is not only a steeple, but likewise a bottle-cone and a bell-entry; and not only an old harbour, but also a new harbour; besides the place they call the tail of the bank, and that stately edificial pile, the custom-house, with diverse churches, schools, and places of worship; a tontine inn, a playhouse, and assembly rooms, built at a great cost of thousands of pounds, for the purpose of having a dance maybe thrice a-year. I'll certainly no go the length of the Port-Glasgow man that came in upon us on the road, and say that the toom house fornent the tontine is a monument of the upsetting vanity of the Greenock folk, but it's surely a type of the enterprizing spirit of the place; for it should be allowed that they must have had great notions of things, and a strong sense of prosperity, to project and bring to a completion such undertakings. But there was an ettling beyond discretion perhaps in this; for a town like Greenock is overly near to our great city, ever to have a genteel independency in its own community to maintain such establishments with a suitable bravery. And so it has, as I was informed, kythed; for the assembly room buildings are in a manner deserted in their purposes; insomuch that some folks are of an opinion that they might be put to a worse use than by being converted into a kirk, as the profane circus in our town was transmogrified into a tabernacle of prayer.

From what I could pick out of my companions in the noddy, it's a serious object with the Port-Glasgow folk to rival Greenock; but the Greenock people, like the cow in the meadow, regardless of the puddock, chew the cud of their own self-satisfaction in great complacency. It would, however, be too critical for the nature of my writings to particularize all the manifold merits and instances of public spirit among the feuars, sub-feuars, and inhabitants of Greenock. They have got, I believe, something of every kind of institution among them, except a lunatic asylum; and they are lied upon if they have not some things that they stand less in need of; for it was a wise saying that I have heard

said of a daft laddie belonging to Glasgow, when he was asked what took him so often to Greenock—"It's a fine place," quo' Jemmy, "for a' the folk there are just like mysel'."

But no to dwell at ouer great a length on the ettling of the Greenockians, I'll just mention a thing that was told to me by a very creditable person that was no Port-Glasgow man. After the Edinburgh Musical Festival, nothing less would serve the aspiring people of Greenock than an oratorio, for which purpose they made a wonderful collection of precentors, melodious weavers, and tuneful cordwainers, together with sackbuts and psalteries, and various other sorts of musical implements of sound; and that nothing fitting might be wanting as to place, they borrowed the oldest kirk in the town; the cold in which prevented some of the flute-players, it is thought, from properly crooking their mouths, while the damp made the fiddlestrings as soft as pudding skins; so that when the work began there was nothing but din for music, and for quavers a chattering o' teeth. The outcry was so dreadful in the chorus of "hallelujah," that it might be well called a halleboloo; and there was a suspicion that the whole affair was a device of some paukie young doctors, who at the time were scant of practice, and thought the cold damp kirk might help them.

When I had seen the outlines and selvages of Greenock, and made my own remarks on the spruce clerks, and noticed a surprising apparition of beautiful misses, I went to see my worthy friend and customer Mr Tartan, who, after some discourse anent the cause of the late falling off in the demand for superfines among his correspondents in the Highlands, invited me to take my dinner with him at his own house, where I met with several gentlemen of a powerful sagacity in all manner of affairs. It was really a wonder to hear how they riddled the merits of things, proving one another's opinions all chaff and stour, a controversial spirit begotten, as Mr Tartan told me, out of the town politics; every body, feuars, sub-feuars, and inhabitants in general, having all a share and handling in the concerns of their body politic.

CHAPTER VII.

As I had promised to Mrs M'Lecket to be at home to my own bed by the retour of the steam-boats, I was obligated to leave the company round Mr Tartan's bowl; so I came away, and found my old friend the Waterloo, at the Custom-house quay, on the point of departure, with a various assortment of characters on board, some of whom, as I was in a blithe mood by reason of the goodness of Mr Tartan's punch and hospitality, entered into a jocosse conversation with me, the which was really very facetious for a time, and lasted till we paid our respects to the douse town of Port-Glasgow. After landing such of the cargo as were belonging to that seaport, the paddles were set a-going again, and away we went. By the time we had passed the old castle, I observed a man sitting by himself, that I took a curiosity to converse with.

THE DUMBIE'S SON.

He was a pale thin man, very fair in the complexion, with light grey eyes, and an odd and unsound look. By his talk, I gathered he had come from among the lakes of Cumberland and the hills of Westmoreland, and that he had been out on an adventure to the Highland lochs and islands, on some superstitious enquiry anent their poeticals, and other monuments of forgotten antiquity. Having satisfied his curiosity, he was bound homeward, and I jealoused by his cackle that he was hard with egg for the publication of a book concerning Icolmkilln, Staffa, and other fantastical places, where the monks and druids were wont to hold their houffs and congregations.

As we sailed along, I rehearsed to him at great length, and with the utmost particularity in my power to do, the whole tot of the history that Deucalion of Kentucky had told me in the morning; to the hearing of which he gave great heed, declaring, that surely the man had a colouring of genius in his thought beyond the common prosaic nature of the American mind, with

other high and mystical touches of a phraseology that had the same sort of resemblance to ordinary discourse, which the flavour of grouse has to barn-door hens—a difference which I lately had occasion to observe in some of my voyages and travels. He then said to me that there was certainly something very wonderful in the reflections of the human understanding when left to itself, and that natural enthusiasm was but a state in which the mind passed on to the contemplation of the result of certain considerations, without pausing to compare them with worldly circumstances. I replied to him, that really his remark was above my reach; but no doubt it had a foundation somewhere, and if not in the order of things, without question in his own imagination, which was still a something wherein the powers of nature must be allowed to inhabit and possess some sort of sway and dominion. At this observe, which he said was exceedingly just and philosophical, he added that, without entering upon any controversy, he would relate to me some anecdotes of his own life, which he was sure would convince me of the soundness of his opinion.

“You must know,” resumed he, after some further digression from the point, “that I do not consider myself as a common man of this world, for I have been brought up under circumstances, which perhaps no other ever experienced. I am the only child of a dumb man and dumb woman—dumb and deaf they were both from their birth, and I was seven years old before I heard the intellectual voice of man—that voice and organ by which his spirit communes with its fellows. I had, it is true, heard the babble and jabber of tongues from those clods of the valley that bear the impress of humanity, like the counters of base metal stamped with the mintage of the guinea—but no vocal effusion of soul had sounded in my hearing.

“My father and mother lived in a small cottage by themselves on the banks of the Combermere. No path led to their dwelling. Nature had imposed silence upon them, and interdicted them from holding communion with their species. I was, in consequence, left without any instructor. They could tell me nothing; and the seasons changed around me, and objects daily passed which I viewed with wonder, but sought not to discover

whence or what they were. The boats that sailed on the lake I thought were birds; but I understood the mute intelligence of the eyes of the cattle and sheep on the pastures around, as I did the looks of my silent parents.

“When I was about six years old my mother died. I knew not then what death was, but I have since acquired the painful knowledge. I saw her weak and moaning, and my father sitting by her pillow, and constantly hovering over her bed. His tears fell fast as he looked at her; at last she gave a faint struggle, and from that moment she moved no more. My father watched her for some time with eager and sorrowful eyes, and then, as if suddenly awakened from a slumber, he started up from the place where he was sitting, and taking me by the hand led me out of the cottage, which he carefully fastened behind me, and lifting me in his arms, carried me to a hamlet about three miles from our house in the solitude. By signs, he made the peasants understand that they were to take care of me, and he stretched himself on the ground and strewed earth over him. Every one looked on and seemed dejected. He then went away, and I never saw him again.

“About a week after this event, an old man, whom I have since learned was the pastor of the parish, came, and took me by the hand, and conducted me to a house where a great number of the country folks were assembled, and when they saw us, they brought out two large black chests from the house, and having placed them on their shoulders, they all mutely followed. I could not divine, in my young wonder, what the solemnity meant, but I was moved with an awful fear, and my heart beat to thickly that I could with difficulty breathe.

“They marched on to a green enclosure, in the middle of which an old large house was situated. It had a strange and deserted look, and in the furniture there was nothing of which, in my simplicity, I could discover the use. In it, however, they placed the two black chests; and the old man, who had led me by the hand, performed a strange ceremony over them. I knew not its purport. His lips moved; I heard a sound, but it only made my spirit hungry, while it chilled it with an indescribable dread.

“When this was done, the two awful black chests were removed into the enclosure. I then remarked, that although it was greener than the fields, it was nothing like them, but heaved up into turfy pillows, some of which were adorned with stones, mossy and furred with the impress of many years. I could not imagine for what use they were placed there, but there was a sadness in the countenance of the people that oppressed my spirit.

“When we had traversed this strange enclosure, close to the wall I saw a deep hole trenched out—into this the two black boxes were slowly lowered, and a little earth was thrown upon them. How dreadful to me was the rattle of that little earth on those mysterious arks. I had heard the summer thunder answered by all the echoes of the mountains, but it was not so dreadful as the sound of that shovel-full of earth. Then the hole was filled up, and I was led back, and placed by the old pastor under the charge of a poor woman in the hamlet, by whom I was taught to speak and to commune with my fellows; but the memory of that spectacle was ever before me—it was in my heart, although I knew not till long after that it was the funeral of my dumb parents.”

There was something in this tale, and in the way the lake man told it, that made all who heard it eerie, and, as it were, afraid of something, no one could tell what. Besides, the night was set in, and though it was as beautiful as the summer ever showed, nature being in a state of composure, the heavens, with all their eyes of light, looking calm upon the world, and the moon shining upon the water, yet there was a silence in the air that was felt in the heart, and the sound of the steam-boat's paddles was likened by the dumbie's son to the wheels of the world that bear us along the tide of time. In short, I know not how it was, but we all fell into a kind of religious churme about the depths and wonders of nature, and the unfathomable sympathies of the heart of man. At last, Mr Gauze of Paisley, who was of our company, a well-read paukie carle, that kens more than he lets on, seeing the frame of our reflections, began, in a far off way, to cast about his cantrips, with the which

I leave the courteous reader to guess what he did, by the rehearsal of the following story, in the telling of which it is not to be described what he effected, not only by his awesome look and voice, but the aids and helps he got from the scene of night, and the solemn waters through which our vessel was working her weary way towards the Renfrew ferry; for by this time we had left Dumbarton castle far behind, and had passed Dunglass, that ancient ruin, of which I have never been able to get any further account, than that it is supposed to have been bigget by the Picts, and doubtless has had the curse of God pronounced against its owners, since they are all utterly perished from off the face of the earth. However, to return to Mr Gauze.

KING CHARLES AND THE WITCHES.

Once on a time, said he, when the funny King Charles was in great straits, and jeopardy of fortune, as he was sitting in the midst of his courtiers and counsellors after supper in his palace, heavy and worn-out in spirit, he declared on his honour as a prince, that he felt himself so oppressed and weighed down, he would grant to any one of them the first reasonable petition he might have occasion to present, who would lighten his fancy that night; whereupon, all the courtiers and counsellors began to strive with one another to divert his majesty, every one telling something that was to be more comical than the tales which had gone before. But their endeavours were all in vain; the more tribulation they put themselves to in order to make the king laugh, and grow again jocose, the more they saddened his royal spirit, till he said, in the words of Solomon, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

But it happened, that there was that night in the presence a learned discreet doctor of divinity, from the west country, on some concern of the kirk which required a canny handling to bring to a proper issue; and he, seeing the weak and feckless striving of the lords and gentlemen, said, "May it please your majesty, I would do the part of a loyal subject in this matter; but the stories I have to tell are no so wonderful as those which

your majesty has graciously endeavoured to endure." The words of which address so drew the king's attention, that he desired the doctor to tell him one of his tales.

"I doubt, most dread monarch," replied the doctor, "that what I have to tell will obtain little credit here; but as your majesty is well known to be, in the words of the Prayer-book, a most religious sovereign, perhaps it may be blessed on your majesty's pious frame of mind, with a salutary impression and effect. What I have to say is of an adventure that befell myself, when I was a lad, before going to the College of Glasgow.

"Your majesty has belike heard that there are certain mystical women in the world called witches. In the shire of Renfrew, we have had, both in time past and at present, no small trouble with their pranks, and it is as thoroughly believed among the country folk as the gospel, that the witches are in the practice of gallanting over field and flood after sunset, in the shape of cats and mawkins, to dance the La Volta with a certain potentate that I shall not offend your majesty by naming.

"I should here explain, that the witches, when they take the shape of hares, charm away the power of pouter and lead; so that unless the gun be loaded with silver, it will not go off, or, if it does go off, it will not kill, especially in the hands of a young sportsman; and that the best antidote to their charm, is for the sportsman, when he is an experienced hand, to put a pair of silver sleeve-buttons in his fowling-piece. When he does this, and fires with effect, it is said, and the fact is often well attested, the hare will never be seen again; but beyond the next hedge, some dubious carlin will, in all human probability, be found riddled in the hips, saying her prayers backwards. What I have to tell is an undoubted proof of this, for it happened to myself in the presence of the late Logan of that ilk, a man of singular piety, and one of the best shots in the shire of Ayr.

"Being staying with him, we one day went out to shoot. It was in the afternoon. We started nothing, and we stayed late, not very content, as your majesty may well think, with such profitless sport. But I trow we have both had cause to remember long that afternoon; for in the gloaming, as we were coursing with our dejected dogs, the which were as disappointed as our-

selves, we started, as we thought, a hare out of a whin bush. It ran before us, in every gesture, lith, and limb, just like a hare, and the dogs pursued it as if it had been nothing less natural. We followed, never doubting that it was a hare.

“A fine har’st evening had set in, and the new moon, the sickle of Time, betokened, in the western heavens, that Nature was binding up the sheaves of our days; but, nevertheless, we followed our game, never suspecting that it was any thing but a poor terrified mawkin. Logan took a vizey, and fired, but his gun flashed in the pan; I likewise presented, and, in the same moment, my hand was smitten with a cramp, or something no canny, but neither of us, for all that, entertained any doubt of the hare being what it appeared—a hare.

“Well, sir, please your majesty, Logan primed again, and I, having beaten the life into my fingers, followed the game, and fired, but missed.—This set Logan foremost, and he shortly after also fired. He might as well have whistled; and what we had at first thought a hare, continued to scamper on unhurt.

“By this time I had loaded again, and after running on some twenty paces in the track of the beast, confident I had a hare in view, I fired a second time. It was of no avail. Logan having in the meanwhile loaded, came up to me.

“In the pursuit, we had followed the hare, as we thought it was, to the walls of an old abbey. It had been a sanctified place in the times of popery, but it was burned down when Glencairn, at the Reformation, herried the monks’ nests throughout Cuningham. Many a sad story was told of that place. It would cruddle the royal blood in your majesty’s sacred veins, were I to relate what is told and believed concerning the deeds done by the popish friars in that ruinous monastery. One day, when a farmer, whom I knew, was pulling down a piece of the wall to help to mend a dyke, he found the skeleton of a human hand built in with the stones. What more he discovered he never would reveal, but from that day he was an altered man. However, to return from this digression, please your majesty, the moon and twilight shone bright on the abbey walls, and we saw the hare, as we thought, as perfect as possible, cowering along the bottom of

the wall. I would have fired, but Logan stopped me. He was a worthy pious man.

“ ‘Lend me your sleeve-buttons,’ said he. They were Bristol stones set in silver. The manner in which he spoke was very solemn. It made the flesh crawl on my bones, and my hair to rise. I said nothing, but took the buttons from my shirt sleeves, keeping my eye steadfast on the hare, as we both thought it was. He did the same. The buttons out of my right sleeve he put into his gun. ‘Put the others in yours,’ said he. I did so. ‘In the name of the Lord,’ cried he, ‘take aim.’ We presented together; we both fired in the same moment, and ran to the spot where we thought a hare had been.”

“ ‘And what the devil was it?’ cried the king.

“ ‘Please your majesty,’ replied the doctor, ‘it was just a fine fat hare.’ ”

During the time of this recital, one Mrs M’Freat, a decent carlin from Oban, was particularly attentive; but at the end, when we were all laughing at King Charles’s disappointment, she said, with a very serious countenance, that we were no doubt free to gaffaw as we pleased; but for her part, she had reason to know and ken that there was mony a thing in this world that required an explanation; and then she proceeded and told us how, one morning in the last summer—but I will relate what she said at full length, in her own words.

THE WRAITH.

A fine morning it was, said she, the lift clear, and the air brisk, and every thing without young and fresh, and quickened, as it were, with the sense of a living power. My youngest dochter, Flora, a bairn o’ ten years and three months, but a thoughtful lassie for her time o’ life, couldna rest in her bed; she was eerie and unco, and fain and fey, under the constraint and pushing on of an invisible hand—in short, she couldna be mastered, and we were obligated to let her run her race; so up she rose out of her bed, and putting on her clothes, went out to

the kailyard to play hersel', and by hersel'; she hadna been there long, when back she came, crying that she had seen a bonny wee white lambie in the eye of the morning, but that, when she went to touch him, he vanished awa'.—There was something like daftness in this, and I canna tell the effect it had on me, that was her mother. I thought the poor bairn was surely gane by herself.—Then she went out again, and back she came, wi' a face o' terrification, pale and wan, her een standing in her head, and her looks raised, and no canny.

"What's the matter, Flora, my dear?" quo' I.

"Oh, I hae seen death!" quo' she.

"And what was he like, my sweet lamb?" I said, scarcely kennin' what I said, for a power was upon my spirit, and I trembled at every limb.

"He's like Jamie Campbell Lorn," quoth the ghastly lassie, "only he has nae flesh on his legs, and his belly's a' banes, just like a creel,—and he looked at me wi' holes in his head, where he should have had een."

"Gude guide us!" said both the gudeman and me, "the bairn has got a waff o' the second sight.—And what did he say to you, Flora?"

"He said nothing," quo' she, "but walked before me, looking round at me. Oh, he was a dreadful-like thing!"

When we heard this, we said no more, but thought wi' seriousness that it couldna but betoken something; and the gudeman put it down in his book, wi' day and date—and think what was the outcome? About a week after, we heard frae Greenock that poor Jamie, on the same day, and at the same hour, fell frae a scaffold in Scott's yard, on the dry dock, and was killed cold dead on the spot.

To this nobody made reply, but all sat silent; and I canna say I was comfortable; for, in the mean time, while Mrs M'Freat was speaking, I saw before us a tall white figure, standing high on the deck—higher than the sons of men; and the lights at the Broomielaw, to which we were now drawing near, shone dimly through the apparition. Oh, but I was glad when the vessel stoppit, for I kent na what to mak o' the spectacle,

till, lo and behold! it was nothing but a fizzing fume of the vapour of the boiler. There ne'er, however, was any thing seen liker to a true ghost in a winding-sheet than it was; so I was exceedingly rejoiced when I found myself once more safely on the dry land, and treading the ground o' Glasgow. Mrs M'Lecket, when I reached the house, was wearying and wondering what could have detained me, and had a bit nice supper waiting my partaking. Thus ended my second voyage—the which, however, although more abundant in personalities of adventure towards myself, was not upon the whole so pleasant as the first; so that my thirst of travelling to see foreign sights was in a manner cooled, and, for the remainder of that season, I comforted myself dously in the Saltmarket.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAVING nourished my faculties for observation by reflecting on the various things I had seen, and the extraordinaries I had heard, I began again to feel the spirit of curiosity germinating to new adventures, which it would at one time have been far from my hand to have undertaken. But travelling enlarges the mind, and experience is a great encourager in the way of venturing afield. I was, however, for a season perplexed anent the airt in which I should steer my course, as the Jack Tars say, till some accident brought me to think that, of late years, our young haberdashers, and others in the fancy line, are in the practice of taking a trip up to the town of London, to see the fashions. Thinking of this, as I was saying, it came into my head that, if such jauntings were profitable to them, the like might be of service to me in my business; at the same time, considering the steady hand I had always held in my calling, it would not do for me to be overly ready to change my methods; and therefore, before attempting any thing of the sort, I thought it would be prudent to see a little more of the world, and look

about me ; for although Glasgow is surely a large and populous place, it must be allowed that it is but a narrow sphere for observation, and that a man who spends his whole life therein, between, as it were, the punchbowl and the coffeeroom, cannot be else, as a man, than one of the numerous family of the *Smalls*, a term which I heard an exhibitor at Baliol's, from our college to Oxford, employ in speaking of persons with poor heads and proud purses, and nobody could dispute with him the justness thereof.

However, not to descant on particularities, let it suffice, that one night, over a dish of tea, (the Englishers, as I afterwards found, say a cup of tea,) with Mrs M'Lecket, I said to her, "What would ye think, mistress, if I were to set out on a journey to London?"

Mrs M'Lecket had then the pourie in her hand to help my cup ; but she set it down with a stot, and pushing back her chair, remained for a space of time in a posture of astonishment, by which I discovered that it was a thing she never expected would have entered my head. I then expounded to her how it might be serviceable to me to inspect the ways of business in London ; but although nothing could be more reasonable than what I set forth on that head, she shook hers, and said, "This comes of your gallanting in the Greenock steam-boats ; but ye're your own master, Mr Duffle, and may do as ye think fit—howsomever, it's my opinion that the coronation has a temptation in it that ye're blate to own."

After thus breaking the ice with Mrs M'Lecket, I consulted with Mr Sweeties as to money matters and lesser considerations ; and having made a suitable arrangement for being from home a whole month, and bought a new trunk for the occasion, with the initial letters of my name on the lid in brass nails, I was taken in a stage-coach to Edinburgh. Some advised me to prefer the track-boat on the canal to Lock No. 16 ; but as I had the long voyage from Leith to London before me, I considered with myself that I would have enough of the water or a' was done, and therefore resolved to travel by land, though it was a thought more expensive.

My companions in the coach consisted of Mrs Gorbals, who

was taking in her youngest daughter, Miss Lizzy, to learn manners at a boarding-school in Edinburgh, and a Greenock gentleman, who was on his way to get the opinion of counsel anent a rividendo on some interlocutor of the Lord Ordinary concerning the great stool law-plea of that town; and we were a very tosh and agreeable company. For of Mrs Gorbals it does not require me to tell, that she is a blithe woman; and Miss Lizzy, although she has not quite so much smeddum as her elder sister, Miss Meg, that Mr M'Gruel the Kilwinning doctor had a work with last year, is, however, a fine, good-tempered lassie, and when well schooled, may pass for a lady in the Trongate, among the best and the brawest, any day. As for the feuars and sub-feuars of Greenock, every body knows what a pith of talent is in them, and how cleverly they can see through the crooks and crevices of all manner of difficulties. I need, therefore, only say that our fellow-passenger had no small portion of the ability common among his townfolk. I should remark by hands, that on the outside of the coach there was a man from Port-Glasgow in the volunteering line, watching a bit box with his cleeding, and hadding on by the rail like grim death.

In the course of our journey to the capital town of Scotland we met with no accident, but had a vast deal of very jocose conversation. Twice or thrice Mrs Gorbals pawkily tried to pick out of me where I was going, and seemed to jealousy that I was bound on a matrimonial exploit; but I was no so kittly as she thought, and could thole her progs and jokes with the greatest pleasance and composure, by which she was sorely put to in her conjectures.

As it was not my intent to stay any time in Edinburgh at the outgoing of my jaunt, as soon as the coach stopped I hired a porter from the Highlands, and he took my trunk on his shoulder, and we walked both together on to Leith. Luckily for me it was that I had been so expeditious, for we reached the pier in the very nick of time, just when the new steam-boat, the City of Edinburgh, was on the wing of departure. So on board I steppit, where I found a very jovial crew of passengers; among others, Doctor and Mrs Pringle from Garnock, who were going up to London, as the reverend doctor told me himself, on account

of their daughter, Mrs Sabre, Miss Rachael that was, being at the downlying, and wishing her mother to be present at the handling.

I said to him, considering what he had suffered in his first voyage, that I was surprised he would have ventured on water again, especially as he had his own carriage. But both he and Mrs Pringle declared, that the tribulation and extortioning of travelling by land was as ill to abide as the sea-sickness, which I can well believe; for at every house, when we changed horses in coming from Glasgow in the stage-coach, there was the stage-driver begging his optional; to say nothing of what Mrs Pringle herself remarked concerning the visible comfort of such a steam-boat, where every thing was on a neat genteel fashion, and no sort of commodity neglected.

I told her, however, that I was not sure but from the boiler there might be a danger, when we were out on the ocean sea; whereupon the doctor, who, in his first voyage to Glasgow, had got an insight of the method of enginery, took and showed me all how it worked, and how the boiler, when the steam was overly strong, had a natural way of its own of breaking the wind off its stomach, as he said, in his pawkie and funny way, which was very diverting to hear. I need not therefore say that I was greatly delighted to find myself in such good company as the doctor and that clever woman his lady, who is surely a fine patron to wives throughout the whole west country, especially in the shire of Ayr.

Nothing could be more facetious than our voyage; every body was just in the element of delight; the sea rippled, and the vessel paddled as if she had been a glad and living thing, and sailed along so sweetly, that both Dr Pringle and me thought that surely the owners had some contrivance of a patent nature for creeshing the soles of her feet.

A JEANIE DEANS IN LOVE.

AMONG the passengers was a Mrs Mashlam, from the vicinity of Mineybole, whom I knew when formerly she was servan' lass to Bailie Shuttle, before she gaed into Edinburgh. She was

then a bonnie guileless lassie, just a prodigy of straight-forward simplicity, and of a sincerity of nature by common; indeed, it was all owing to her chaste and honest demeanour, that she got so well on in the world as to be married to her most creditable gudeman, Mr Mashlam, who is not only of a bien circumstance, but come of a most respectable stock, having cousins and connexions far ben among the genteelity in Edinburgh. He fell in with her on her return from her great adventure with the Duke of York at London, which made such a great noise throughout the west at the time, and which, but for open-hearted innocency, would have left both cloors and dunkles in her character.

At the first I did not know Bell again, but she knew me, and made up to me, introducing her gudeman, and telling me that they were going up on a jaunt to London, because she had been for some time no in very good health, but chiefly to see the King crowned, the which, I have a notion, was the errand's end of most of us, notwithstanding what Doctor and Mrs Pringle said about their daughter's lying-in. After some change of conversation, we sat down on stools on the deck—a great convenience, and most pleasant in such fine weather as we had; and on my speering at Mrs Mashlam anent her former journey to London, of which I heard but the far-off sough of rumour, she blushed a thought in the face, and then said, “Noo, that a's past, and my folly of teen love cured, I needna be ashamed to tell the particulars before the face of the whole world, and the fifteen Lords.

“When I was servan' with Captain MacConochy, Sergeant Lorie of his company had a wark with me. He came often about the house, and, as he was of a serious turn like mysel', I thought the mair o' him that he never spoke of love, for he wasna in a way to marry. But ae night as I lay on my bed, it was, as it were, whispered in my ear, that if I could do a thing for him that would mak him hae a pride in me, he would master the doubts of his fortune, and mak me his wife. Wi' this notion, I fancied that I might hae the power to persuade the Duke of York, if I could get a word of his royal grace, to gie the sergeant a commission. The road, however, is lang between Edin-

burgh and the Horse Guards, but a woman's love will travel further than horses; so I speered at the sergeant, without letting on to him o' what was in my head, about the way of going to London, and how to see the Duke, and when I got my half year's fee, I got leave frae my mistress for a fortnight to see a frien', and set out in the smack for the Horse Guards.

"When I reached London, I dressed mysel' in my best, and speered my way to the Duke's office. The first day I lingered blately about the place. On the second, the folk and soldiers there thought I wasna in my right mind, and compassionated me. A weel-bred gentleman, seeing me hankering at the gate, enquired my business, and when I told him it was with his Royal Grace, he bade me bide and he would try what could be done; and shortly after going into the house, he came out, and said the Duke would see me.

"Up to that moment I felt no want of an encouraging spirit; but I kenna what then came o'er me, for my knees faltered, and my heart beat, as I went up the stairs; and when I was shown into the presence, in a fine room, with spacious looking-glasses, I could scarcely speak for awe and dread. The shawl fell from my shoulders, and his royal grace, seeing my terrification, rose from his sittee, and put it on in the most ceeveleezed and kindly manner. He was, in reality, a most well-bred gentleman, and, for discretion, would be a patron to mony a Glasgow manufacturer and Edinburgh writer. He then encouraged me to proceed with my business, asking me in a hamely manner what it was.

"Please your royal grace," said I, "there's a young lad, a friend o' mine, that I would fain get promoted; and, if your royal grace would like to do a kind turn, he would soon be an officer, as he's a sergeant already. He has nobody to speak a word for him, so I hae come from Scotland on purpose to do it mysel'."

"The Duke looked at me with a sort of kindly curiosity, and replied—'Well, I have heard and read of such things, but never met with the like before.'

"He then enquired very particularly all about what was between the sergeant and me, and if I was trysted to marry him; and I told him the plain simple truth, and I could see it did not

displease him that I had undertaken the journey on the hope of affection. He said there were, however, so many claims, that it would not be easy to grant my request. I told him I knew that very well, but that others had frien's to speak for them, and the sergeant had nane but mysel'. Upon which he looked at me very earnestly, with a sort of mercifulness in his countenance, and, putting his hand in his pocket, gave me three guineas, and bade me go away back on the Sunday following by the smack to Leith. He gart me promise I would do so; and then, as I was going out of the room, he bade me, after I had ta'en my passage place, to come again on the morn, which I did; but on that morning he had broken his arm, and couldna be seen. I saw, however, one of his lords. They told me, since syne, it was no doubt my Lord Palmerston; and his lordship informed me what had happened to the duke, and gave me two guineas, obliging me, in like manner as his royal grace had done, to promise I would leave London without delay, assuring me, in a most considerate manner, that my business would be as well attended to in my absence as if I were to stay. So I thankit him as well as I could, and told him he might say to the duke, that as sure as death I would leave London on the Sabbath morning, not to trouble him any more, being content with the friendship of his royal spirit.

“Accordingly, on the Sabbath I gaed back in the smack, and the sergeant would hardly believe me when I said whar I had been, and what I had done for him. But when he was made an ensign, he turned his back on me, and set up for a gentleman. I thought my heart would have gurged within me at the slight; and a very little would have made me set out a second time to the duke, and tell him how I had been served; but, after greeting out my passion and mortification on my secret pillow, I thought to mysel', that I would let the sergeant fall out in some other's hand, and that I was none the worse for the good I had wisied to him as a soldier, though, by altering his vain heart, it had done himself none as a man; and when I cam into this contentment, I got the better of my pining and sorrow.” And in saying these words, she took Mr Mashlam in a loving manner by the hand, and said, “I hae no reason to rue the disap-

pointment of my first love; and I only hope that Mr Lorie, for the kind-natured duke's sake, will prove true to his colours, lightly though he valued my weak and poor affection."

Every body in the steam-boat was greatly taken with Bell, and none in all the company was treated with more respect than her and her gudeman. So on we sailed in the most agreeable manner.

Doctor Pringle and the mistress, having visited London before, were both able and most willing to give me all sort of instruction how to conduct myself there, which the doctor assured me was the biggest town by far that he had ever seen in his life; and certainly, when I saw it myself, I had no reason to doubt the correctness of his judgment, although, in some edificial points, it may not be able to stand a comparative with Edinburgh or Glasgow. But, notwithstanding the experience which they had of the ways of managing in London, we were sorely put to it on our disembarking at Wapping; for the doctor, to show me how well he could set about things, left me and Mrs Pringle standing on the wharf, and went himself to bring a hackney for us and our luggage. They were, in their way to Captain Sabre's in Baker Street, to set me down at the lodging-house in Norfolk Street, Strand, where they had been civilly treated while living there when up about their great legacy—"but ance awa' aye awa'." Long and wearily did Mrs Pringle and me wait, and no word of the doctor coming back. The mistress at last grew uneasy, and I was terrified, suffering more than tongue can tell, till the doctor made his appearance in a coach, as pale as ashes, and the sweat hailing from his brow. He had lost his road; and, rambling about in quest of it, and likewise of a coach, was mobbit by a pack of ne'er-do-weels and little-worth women in a place called Ratcliffe Highway, and in the hobleshow his watch was pickit out of his pocket by a pocket-picker, and his life might have been ta'en but for the interference of a creditable looking man, who rescued him out of their hands.

This was a sore sample to me of the Londoners; and I quaked inwardly when, as we drove along the street in the hackney, I

saw the multitudes flowing onwards without end, like a running river, thronger than the Trongate on a Wednesday, especially when I thought of the crowd that was expected to be at the coronation. However, nothing happened, and I was set down with my trunk at the door of the doctor's old lodging in Norfolk Street, Strand, where the landlady was most glad to see the doctor and the mistress looking so well; but her house was taken up with foreigners from different parts of the country, come to see the king crowned, and she could not accommodate me therein. However, as I was a friend of the doctor's, she invited me to step into her parlour, and she would send to a neighbour in Howard Street, that had a very comfortable bedroom to let. So I bade my fellow-passengers good-day, and, stepping in, was in due season accommodated, as was expected, in the house of Mrs Damask, a decent widow woman, that made her bread by letting lodgings to single gentlemen.

Having thus narrated the occasion and voyage of my coming to London, I will now pause, in order to digest and methodize such things as it may be entertaining to the courteous reader to hear, concerning my exploits and observes in the metropolitan city; for it is no my intent to enter into the particularities of buildings and curiosities, but only to confine my pen to matters appertaining to the objects of business that drew me thither, with such an account of the coronation as may naturally be expected from one who had so many advantages at the same as I had; not, however, would I have it supposed that I paid any greater attention to the pageantry thereof than was becoming a man of my years and sobriety of character.

CHAPTER IX.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CORONATION.

LONDON being, as is well known, a place of more considerable repute than Greenock, or even Port-Glasgow, notwithstanding

the renown of its steeple, upon which I have so fully enlarged in my foregoing voyages, it seems meet that I should be at some outlay of pains and particularities in what I have to indite concerning it; and therefore it is necessary to premise, by way of preface, to appease critical readers, that my observations were not so full and satisfactory as they might have been, because of the hubbub of his majesty's royal coronation, which happened to take place while I was there. It's true that I had an inkling, by the newspapers, before my departure from Glasgow, that the solemnity might be performed about the time I counted on being in London, but every body knows it was a most uncertain thing; and as for the king's own proclamation anent the same, is it not written in the Bible, "Put not your trust in princes?" However, scarcely had Mrs Damask shown me the bedroom that was to be mine, and I had removed our sederunt, after settling terms, to her parlour, where she was to get me a chop of mutton for my dinner, when she began to enquire if I wasna come to see the coronation. But I said to her, which was the fact, "I am come on business; no that I object to look at the crowning the king, if it's possible, but it would be an unco like thing o' a man at my years of discretion to be running after ony sic proformity."

She was, however, very much like my own landlady, Mrs M'Lecket, a thought dubious of my sincerity on that point; and the mair I said to convince her that I had a very important matter on hand, the less did she look as if she believed me. But she said nothing, a thing which I must commend as the height of prudence, and as a swatch of good breeding among the Englishers; for there is not a Scotch landlady who, in such a case, would not have shaken her head like a sceptic, if she didna charge me with telling an evendoun lee.

When I was sitting at my dinner, there arose a great tooting of horns in the street—most fearful it was to hear them; and I thought that an alarm must be somewhere; so, ringing the bell, Mrs Damask came into the room, saying it was but the evening newspapers, with something about the coronation, the which raised my curiosity, and I thought that surely the said something must be past ordinaire to occasion such a rippet; and, therefore, I sent out and paid a whole shilling for one of the

papers, but it contained not a word of satisfaction. It, however, had the effect of causing me, when I had finished my chack of dinner, to resolve to go out to inspect the preparations that were making at Westminster Hall and the Abbey. Accordingly, Mrs Damask telling me how I was to direct myself, I sallied forth in quest of the same; and after getting into that street called the Strand, found that I had nothing to do but flow in the stream of the people; and I soon made an observe, that the crowd in London are far more considerate than with us at Glasgow—the folk going one way keep methodically after one another; and those coming the other way do the same, by a natural instinct of civilization, so that no confusion ensues, and none of that dinging, and bumping, and driving, that happens in the Trongate, especially on a Wednesday, enough to make the soberest man wud at the misleart stupidity of the folk, particularly of the farmers and their kintra wives, that have creels with eggs and butter on their arms.

On entering the multitude, I was conveyed by them to the Cross, where there is an effigy of a king, no unlike, in some points, our King William; and winding down to the left, I saw divers great houses and stately fabrics, of various dimensions, suited to their proper purposes, as may be found set forth in the "Picture of London," a book which I bought on the recommendation of Mrs Damask, and in which there is a prodigality of entertainment. But the thing which struck me most as I passed by, was the cloth-shop of one Mr Solomon, a Jew man, in the window of which were many embroidered waistcoats, and other costly but old-fashioned garments, with swords of polished steel, and cockit hats, and a paraphernalia sufficient to have furnished the best playhouse with garbs for all the ancient characters of the tragedies and comedies.

Seeing such a show of bravery, I stoppit to look; and falling into a converse with a gentleman, he told me—when I said that surely Mr Solomon did not expect to get many customers for such old shopkeepers—that what I saw were court dresses, and were lent, with swords, and buckles, and all other necessary appurtenances to the bargain, for five guineas a-piece, to gentlemen going to the levees and drawing-rooms, and that they were

there displayed for hire to those who intended to see the ceremonies in Westminster Hall. This I thought a very economical fashion; but it did not make so much for the cloth trade as the old custom of folks wearing their own apparel; and it seemed to me that it would have been more for the advantage of business, had the privy councillors, and those who had the direction of the coronation, ordered and commanded all gentlemen to wear new dresses of a new fashion, instead of those curiosities of antiquity that make honest people look like the pictures of Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, Knight of the Garter, which may be seen in one of the volumes of my very old magazine, wherein there is a full and particular account of the late coronation, the which was the cause of my bringing the book in my trunk from Glasgow, in order to enable me to make comparisons.

I had not travelled far towards the abbey of Westminster, when I had good reason to see and note that, considering all things, it was very lucky for me to have got to London when I did; for there was such a vast preparation that it could not, I think, have been in the king's power, with any sort of respect for his people, to have postponed his royal coronation. The sight, indeed, was such as not to be told; hundreds of men were as busy as bees working at their bikes, building lafts and galleries for spectators, by which the owners expected to make a fortune, it being certain that money at the time of a coronation, as the old song sings—

“Flies like the dust in a summer's day.”

However, there were sedate persons among the crowd, with whom I entered into discourse; and they told me, as indeed the matter came truly to pass, that the Babel-builders of the scaffolds were overdoing the business, for that, although great prices for seats may have been given at the old king's solemnity, the like would not happen again, the space now around the abbey, and all the way the procession was to march, being greatly enlarged, compared to what it was in former times, and so capable of accommodating a far greater multitude than of old.

This observe made me look about me; and to touch here and

there on the generalities of the subject to other persons, who, having a civil look, encouraged me, though a stranger to break my mind to them.

I fell in, among the rest, with a most creditable elderly man, something of a Quaker it would seem, by the sobriety of his attire—the colour was a brown mixture—and he said to me that he thought the coronation a most ill-timed proceeding, to which I replied, that surely in a season of great distress throughout the kingdom, it was not well counselled.

“I don’t speak of THE DISTRESSES,” said he, in a dry manner, “because that is what should be. The landlords in parliament cannot expect to have high rents and regular-paying tenants, if they reduce their customers to half-pay. But it is the queen, sir—the queen’s case is what makes it most imprudent. All these poor people, with their scaffolds and booths, will be ruined by it. Nobody will come to see the coronation, for it is feared there will be a riot.”

“God bless you, sir, you are one of the protectors of innocence, I can see that,” cried a randy-like woman with a basket selling grozets, overhearing our conversation. “Get about your own affairs, hussy!” exclaimed my sober-looking friend. “It is such as you that have ruined the queen’s cause. What have you to do with her guilt or innocence, you baggage you?”

The woman looked at him very severely; and, as I was only a stranger in London, I thought it best to make nimble heels from the scene to another part; and before I was well away, I heard her at him, banning the faint-heartedness of him and all his like, for false friends to the queen.

The next I spoke to was a young genteel man, with a most methodical gravat perjinkly tied, and I enquired at him what was his opinion. “It will be a werry fine thing. His majesty, you see, vill go halong that there platform, vith trumpets and the ouse of peers; then he vill come by this ere place, and get into the habbey there, where the harshbishop vill hanoint im vith the oil, and put the crown hon is ead. Then he vill come back; hand hout that rection yonder, the champion, hall in armour, vill ride hinto the all, and challenge to single combat his majesty’s henemies.”

“You may say that, now that Boney’s gone,” cried a pawky young lad, who was the companion of this gentleman; “but it’s my opinion, the whole will be a most confounded bore. Give me a review for a show. How can old men, judges and privy councillors, with gouty toes and shaking heads, make else than a caricature of solemnities?”

“Very just,” interposed a man in a suit of shabby black, of a clerical cut. “The ceremony has survived the uses which gave it sanctity in the eyes of the people. It will now pass like a pageant of the theatre, and be no longer impressive on its own account, but merely on account of the superior quantity of the silk and lace that may be shown in the dresses. Had the spirit of the age been consulted by his majesty, the thing would have been different. It would have been shown in some royal act of grace and favour, such as the foundation of a noble institution, where courses of lectures might be given by men of genius and literature, qualified to do justice to the topics.” I supposed the gentleman was a professor of lecturing himself; and dreading that he might open on me, I walked to another part of the edificial preparations, where I met with a man of a very sound understanding, who described to me how the floor of the platform was to be covered with broad cloth, which both of us agreed was a most commendable encouragement of trade on the part of his most gracious majesty; and we thought, likewise, that the expense, both by the king and the spectators, was a spreading of money, that would augment the means of spending to those employed, and, through them, give encouragement to the dealers in all desirable commodities. The very outlay for ale and strong drink, will encourage the brewers, and the colonies, and the traders in wines, from which farmers and merchants will draw profit; and all traders so heartened, will increase the brawls of their wives and families, to the great advantage of the manufacturers and those in the fancy line.

While we were thus speaking on the beneficial consequences of the coronation, a most termagant rioter came up, bawling one minute, “The Queen for ever!” and then turning his tongue in his cheek, and roaring, “God save the King!” I really thought the rank and dignity of both their majesties suf-

ferred greatly by this proceeding; and I wonder the ministers did not, by a proclamation, forbid all such irreverence anent the characters of the king and queen. Saying this to a stiff and dry man, of a pale metaphysical look, and a spare habit of body, he said to me, "That the coronation did not concern personalities, but was a solemn recognition of the monarchical principle in the constitution, and that they were vulgar fools who considered it as a custom, which any sensible man confounded with two such mere puppets as the individuals we call king and queen." Surely this was the saying of a dungeon of wit, and I would fain have gone deeper into the matter with him; but just as we were on the edge of something of a very instructive nature, a gang of rankringing enemies of blackguard callants came bawling among us, and I was glad to shove myself off in another direction.

The first place where I again fell in with other conversible visitants was near to a side-door of Westminster-Hall, where I was greatly chagrined to find two public-houses within the same—what would our provost think of even one change-house within the entrance of the new court-houses? and here were two, roaring full of strangers and wayfaring people, within the very bounds and precincts of the coronation palace! I there forgathered with a batch of decent-looking folk, moralizing on the scene. Some thought the booths and benches were very handsome; and certainly such of them as were hung with the red durant, and serge and worsted fringes, might deserve a commendation, as they could not but prove to the profit of business; but as for those that were ornamented with paper and paintings, though they might cast a show of greater splendour, they were undoubtedly of a very gaudy nature, and not at all suitable to the solemn occasion of a royal coronation.

When I had, by this itinerancy of the preparations, pacified my curiosity, I returned homeward to the house of Mrs Damask to get a cup of tea, and to consult with her as to what was best to be done about getting admittance to the Hall or the Abbey; for by this time it was growing dark, and there was but the Wednesday between and the day fixed, which made me resolve, as I did upon her advice, to postpone all serious thoughts of

business until after the ceremony—people's heads being turned, and nobody in a state to talk with sobriety on any other matter or thing.

While we were thus conversing, and the tea getting ready, a chaise, with a footman behind it, came to the door, and a knocking ensued with the knocker that was just an alarm to hear—and who should this be but that worthy man Doctor Pringle, in his gudeson's, the Captain Sabre's carriage, come to assist me how I could best see the show, "Knowing," said he, "Mr Duffle, that you are a man of letters, and may be inclined to put out a book on the coronation, I couldna but take a pleasure in helping you forward to particulars. Mrs Pringle herself would have come with me; but this being the first night with her dochter Rachel, who is not so near her time as we expectit, she couldna think of leaving her, so I came by myself to let you know that we have a mean in our gudeson to get tickets baith to see the Hall and the Abbey, so you may set yourself easy on that head. But, Mr Duffle, there's a great impediment, I doubt, to be overcome; for it's ordered by authority, that gentlemen are to be in court dresses, and I fear ye'll think that o'er costly, being so far from your own shop, where you could get the cloth at the first hand; over and above which, the coronation is so near, that I doubt it is not in the power of nature for any tailor to make the garb in time."

I need not say how well pleased I was with this complimentary attention of Doctor Pringle; and when I told him of Mr Solomon and the old-fashioned clothes, we had a most jocose laugh about the same; and he said, that, as soon as I had taken my tea, we would go together in the captain's carriage to Mr Solomon's shop, and get a suit of court clothes for me. As for the doctor, he stood in no need of such vanity; having brought up his gown and bands with him, in case of being obligated to preach any charity sermons, as he was in his legacy visit to London—and he was told that clergymen were to be admitted in their gowns. "Indeed," said the doctor, "Rachel wrote to her mother of this when she pressed us to come to see the coronation, which was the cause of Mrs Pringle putting the gown

in the portmanty ; for you know, if I preach in another's pulpit, there is never an objection to lend either gown or bands."

The doctor then went to the window, and, opening the same, said to the coachman, that he might put up his horses for a season at a change-house, and come back in half an hour ; but I could discern that the flunkeys were draughty fellows, though they seemed to obey him ; for when they, at the end of the time, came back with the carriage for us, the horses were reeking hot, and when we stepped in, to go to Mr Solomon's at Charing Cross, the first thing the doctor laid his hand on was a lady's ridicule, and how it could have come into the carriage was past all comprehension. But the footman took charge of it, and said he knew the owner, so the doctor gave it to him ; but when I came to reflect at leisure on this, I thought it was very soft of the doctor to give it up without an examination.

By the time we got to Mr Solomon's shop it was full of strangers, on the same errand as ourselves, and it was long before we could be served. At last, however, the doctor and me were persuaded by the man to take a sky-blue silk suit, richly flowered, with an embroidered white satin waistcoat, adorned with glass buttons. I would fain myself have had one of the plain cloth sort, such as I saw the generality of gentlemen preferring, but I was overly persuaded, particularly by the man offering me it for a guinea less than the others were let for. The doctor, too, in this was partly to blame ; for he greatly insisted, that the gayer the apparel the more proper it was for the occasion, although I told him that a sky-blue silk dress, with great red roses, and tulips, and glass buttons, was surely not in any thing like a becoming concordance with the natural douceness of my character. However, persuaded I was ; and we brought the dress away—sword, and cockit-hat, with all the other paraphernalia ; and the doctor and me had great sport at my lodgings about the spurtle-sword, for we were long of finding out the way to put it on—for it was very incommodious to me on the left side, as I have been all my days cary-handed. Indeed, we were obligated to call up both Mrs Damask and the footmen to instruct us : and I thought the fellow would have gone off at the nail with laughing, at seeing and hearing the

doctor's perplexity and mine. However, we came to a right understanding at last; and the doctor wishing me good-night, went home to his gudeson's, with a promise to come down to me betimes in the morning.

After he was departed, I began to consider of the borrowed dress, and I was not at all satisfied with myself for the gayety thereof; I thought also that it must surely be one very much out of fashion, or it would never have been so much pressed upon me at a moderate rate. But Mrs Damask thought it most handsome; so, submitting my own judgment to the opinion of others, I reasoned myself into contentment, and getting a mutchkin of London porter in, and a partan, which to me was dainties, I made a competent supper, and retired to my bed, where I slept as comfortable as could be till past eight o'clock next morning, when I rose and had my breakfast, as I had bargained with Mrs Damask, for the which I was to pay her at the rate of seven shillings per week, a price not out of the way, considering London and the coronation time, when, as was understood at Glasgow, every thing was naturally expected to be two prices.

By the time I had got my breakfast, and was in order to adventure forth, Captain Sabre's carriage, with the doctor and Mrs Pringle, came to the door, to take me out with them to show me the curiosities of London. But before going, Mrs Pringle would see my court dress, which she examined very narrowly, and observed, "It must have cost both pains and placks when it was made; but it's sore worn, and the colour's right faded. Howsomever, Mr Duffle, it will do vastly well, especially as few ken you."

This observe of Mrs Pringle did not tend to make me the more content with my bargain; but I was no inclined to breed a disturbance by sending back the things, and I could no bear the thought of a law-plea about hiring clothes to look at the king.

Mrs Pringle having satisfied her curiosity with my garments, we all went into the carriage, and drove to a dress-maker's, where she had dealt before, to get a new gown and mutch for the coronation. The mantua-maker would fain have persuaded her to have taken a fine glittering gauze, spangled and pedigreed

with lace and gum-flowers; but Mrs Pringle is a woman of a considerate character, and was not in a hurry to fix, examining every dress in the room in a most particular manner, that she might, as she told me, be able to give an explanation to Nanny Eydent of the coronation fashions. She then made her choice of a satin dress, that would serve for other times and occasions, and adhered to it, although the mantua-making lady assured her that satin was not to be worn, but only tissues and laces; the mistress, however, made her putt good, and the satin dress was obligated to be sent to her, along with a bonnet, that would require the particularity of a millinder's pen to describe.

When we had settled this matter, we then drove home to Captain Sabre's, to hear about the tickets, where I got one, as being a literary character, to the box set apart for the learned that were to write the history of the banqueting part of the solemnity, and it was agreed that I was to be at the door of admittance by three o'clock in the morning; the Doctor and Mrs Pringle were provided, by the captain's means, with tickets both for the Hall and Abbey, he himself was to be on guard, and Mrs Sabre, being heavy-footed, and thereby no in a condition to encounter a crowd, was to go with a party of other married ladies, who were all in the like state, to places in the windows of a house that overlooked the platform; so that nothing could be better arranged, not only for me to see myself, but to hear what others saw of the performance in those places where I could not of possibility be.

And here I should narrate, much to the credit of the Londoners, that nothing could exceed the civility with which I was treated in the house of Captain Sabre, not only by himself and the others present; for many ladies and gentlemen, who knew he was to be on guard, and how, through his acquaintance, we had been favoured in tickets, came in to enquire particulars, and to talk about the coronation, and whether the queen really intended to claim admittance. In a like company in Glasgow I would have been left at the door, but every one was more attentive to me than another, on understanding I was the Mr Duffle of Blackwood's Magazine. The captain insisted on my taking an early family dinner, saying they had charged their hour to

accommodate the doctor, and the doctor likewise pressed me, so that I could not in decency refuse, having, as I have mentioned, postponed all business till after the coronation. In short, it is not to be told the kindness and discretion which I met with.

In the afternoon, the Doctor, Mrs Pringle, and me, were sent out again in the carriage to see the preparations and scaffolding, and it was just a miracle to hear the doctor's wonderment at the same, and the hobleshow that was gathering around. As for Mrs Pringle, she was very audible on the waste and extravagance that was visible every where, and said, that although a pomp was befitting the occasion on the king's part, the pomposity of the scaffoldings was a crying sin of vanity and dissipation.

When we had satisfied ourselves, and I had pointed out to them the circumstantialia which I had gathered the night before, they conveyed me to the house of Mrs Damask, where I had my lodgment, and we bade one another good-night; for although it was yet early, we agreed that it would be as well for us to take, if possible, an hour or two's rest, the better to withstand the fatigue and pressure of the next day; and accordingly, when I went up stairs, I told Mrs Damask of that intent, and how I would like, if it could be done, that she would have the kettle boiling by times, for me to have a bite of breakfast by three o'clock in the morning, which she very readily promised to do, having other lodgers besides me that were to be up and out by that time.

Thus have I related, at full length, to the best of my recollection, all the preliminary and prefatory proceedings in which I was concerned about the coronation; the ceremonies and solemnities of which I will now go on to tell, setting down nought that is not of a most strict veracity, having no design to impose upon the understanding of posterity, but only a sincere desire to make them, as well as the living generation, acquaint with the true incidents and character of that great proceeding, the like of which has not been in this country in our time, if it ever was in any other country at any time, to the end and purpose that the scene and acting thereof may have a perpetuity by being in the pages of my writings.

CHAPTER X.

THE CORONATION.

I HAD but an indifferent night's rest; for the anxiety that I suffered, lest I should oversleep myself, prevented me in a great degree from shutting my eyes. So I was up and stirring before "the skreigh o' day;" and I was in a manner out of the body at Mrs Damask, who had not the breakfast ready so soon as I had hoped she would. It was more than a whole quarter of an hour past three o'clock in the morning before I got it and was dressed; and when I was dressed, I durst not almost look at myself in the looking-glass, with my broidered garments of sky-blue, the sword, and the cockit hat, I was such a figure. Judge, then, what I felt when I thought on going out into the streets, so like a fantasy of Queen Anne's court. Luckily, however, another gentleman in the house, who had likewise got a ticket and dress, was provided with a coach for the occasion, and he politely offered me a seat; so I reached the Hall of Westminster without any inordinate trouble or confusion.

Having been shown the way to the gallery where I was to sit, I sat in a musing mood, seeing the personages coming in like a kirk filling. A murmuring was heard around, like the sough of rushing waters, and now and then the sound of an audible angry voice. As the dawn brightened, the hall was lightened, and the broad patches of white, and red, and other colours, that seemed like bales and webs of cloth in the galleries forenent me, gradually kithed into their proper shape of ladies and gentlemen.

I now took my old magazine out of my pocket, and began to make comparisons; but for a time I was disturbed by ladies coming into the gallery and sitting down beside me, talking much, and very highly pleased.

The performance of the day began by sixteen queer-looking men, dressed into the shape of barons, rehearsing how they were to carry a commodity over the king's head, called a canopy. It was really a sport to see in what manner they endeavoured to march, shouldering the sticks that upheld it, like bairns playing

at soldiers. Among this batch of curiosities, there was pointed out to me a man of a slender body; that was the great Mr Brougham, and a proud man, I trow, he was that day, stepping up and down the hall with a high head and a crouse look, snuffing the wind with a pride and panoply just most extraordinary to behold.

By and by, the nobles, and counsellors, and great officers and their attendants, a vast crowd, all in their robes of state—and a most gorgeous show they made—came into the hall, followed by the king himself, who entered with a marvellous fasherie, as I thought it, of formalities, and so he seemed, or I'm mistaken, to think himself; for I could see he was now and then like to lose his temper at the stupidity of some of the attendants. But it's no new thing for kings to be ill served; and our majesty might by this time, I think, have been used to the misfortune, considering what sort of men his ministers are.

Shortly after the king had taken his place on the throne, the crown and the other utensils of royalty were brought, with a great palavering of priesthood and heraldry, and placed on the council-table before him; and when he had ordered the distribution thereof, the trumpets began to sound, and the whole procession to move off. His majesty, when he reached the head of the stairs, was for a time at some doubt as to the manner of descending, till a noble in scarlet came and lent him his arm, for the which his majesty was very thankful at the bottom. Meanwhile a most idolatrous chanting and singing was heard, as the procession slid slowly down the hall, and out at the door, and along the platform to the abbey. Those who had places for the abbey as well as the hall, then hurried out; and, while the king was absent, there was but little order or silence in the company, people talking and moving about.

I now began to weary, and to grudge at not having got a ticket to the Abbey likewise; but trusting to Doctor Pringle and the mistress for an account of what was doing there, it behoved me to be content; so, with others, I stepped down from where I was sitting, and looked at the preparations for dressing the royal table, which had a world of pains bestowed on it—divers gentlemen measuring with foot-rules the length and the breadth

thereof that was to be allowed for the dishes, no jooking the tithe of an inch in the placing of the very saltfits. But there was one thing I could not comprehend; which was a piece of an old looking-glass, in a green painted frame, with four gilded babies, about the size of a bairn's doll, at the corners, placed flat in the middle. Surely, it was not for the intent to let the king see how he looked with the crown on his brows; and, if it was not for that purpose, I wonder what it was there for—but truly it was a very poor commodity. In the mean time, golden vessels, flagons, and servers, and other dunkled and old-fashioned articles of the like metal, were placed in shelves on each side of the throne for a show, like the pewter plates, dripping-pans, pot-lids, and pint-stoups in a change-house kitchen. Some thought it very grand; but, for me, I thought of King Hezekiah showing his treasures to the messengers of Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon;—for the foreign ambassadors, whose names are worse to utter than even that of the son of Baladan, and to spell them is past the compass of my power, sat near to this grand bravado of ancient pageantry.

By this time I had got some insight into the art of seeing a coronation; so that, after satisfying my curiosity with the internals of the hall, I strayed out upon the platform, partly to get a mouthful of caller air, and partly to get a drink of porter, for the weather was very warm, and I was very dry by reason of the same, with the help of a biscuit in my pocket. And while I was about the porter-job in one of the two public-houses before spoken of, a shout got up that the procession was returning from the abbey, and I got up and ran to get back to my seat in the hall; but as the crowd was easy and well bred, before I reached the door I halted, and thought I might as well take a look at the procession, and compare it with our King Crispin's coronation, which took place on the 12th of November, A.D. 1818; and the order of which I will state herein, with annotations, to the end and intent that posterity, in reading this book, may have a clear notion of what it was; and the more especially that his majesty's ministers—I mean those of King George IV.—may have a proper pattern for the next ceremony of the kind; for it was most manifest to me, that the shoemakers' affair

was a far finer show than the one that I had come so far afield to see. But this is not to be wondered at, considering how much more experience the craft have; they being in the practice of crowning and processing with King Crispin, according to law, every year; by which they have got a facility of hand for the business, as is seen in their way of doing the same; the form and order whereof follows:—

ORDER OF THE PROCESSION OF KING CRISPIN,

*As it moved from the Barrack-Square, Glasgow, on Thursday the 12th of
November 1818, about 12 o'clock.*

Herald.

CHAMPION, (1)

Supported by two Aides-de-Camp.

Two Captains.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music. (2)

Two Captains.

Then follows part of the Body.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music. (3)

Colonel.

Three Lords-Lieutenant.

Twenty-four Ushers.

Two Captains.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music. (4)

Secretary of State.

Privy Councillors.

THE KING,

SUPPORTED BY TWO DUKES,

And protected by four Life-Guards.

(1) There was no Champion in the procession of his sacred majesty.—Surely it was a great omission to leave him out.

(2) There was no such band of music as at King Crispin's—four fiddlers, three clarionets, with drums and fifes—but only Popish-like priests, and callants in their father's sarks, singing, and no good at it.

(3) Music again. His sacred majesty had no such thing.

(4) Band of music the third—it was the regiment's from the barracks. What had King George to compare with that?

Nine Pages, (5)

Protected by four Guards.

Two Captains.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music. (6)

Twenty Lords.

Two Captains.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music. (7)

LATE KING, (8)

Supported by two Dukes.

Two Captains.

Six Lieutenants.

A COSSACK. (9)

A party of Caledonians, with two Pipers. (10)

Two Captains.

Twelve Lieutenants.

INDIAN KING,

Supported by two Bashaws. (11)

A Page.

Two Captains.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Music.

Six Lieutenants.

Two Sheriffs.

Macer.

(5) King George IV. had but six pages—King Crispin had nine, bearing up his train.

(6) Music again. Oh, what scrimping there was of pleasant sounds, compared to our show at Glasgow!

(7) Music again. Think of that, Lord Londonderry, and weep. No wonder you delight in stratagems and spoils—I'll say no more.

(8) I didna approve, at this time, of this show of the late king, being myself a loyal man, and the Radicals then so crouse; for I thought that the having the king of the past-time in the procession, was like giving a hint to the commonality, that it would be a great reform to have annual kings as well as annual parliaments.

(9) *A Cossack*.—There was, to be sure, a Russian ambassador; but what's an Ambassador compared to a Cossack?

(10) "A party of Caledonians, with two Pipers."—There was no such thing.

(11) "Indian King, supported by two Bashaws."—O, Lord Londonderry, but ye have made a poor hand o't!—what had ye to set beside an Indian king, supported by two Bashaws?

LORD MAYOR,

Supported by two Aldermen.

Ten White Apron Boys. (12)

Two Captains.

BRITISH PRINCE,

Supported by two Aides-de-Camp.

A Page.

Standard-Bearer.

Music.

Lieutenant-Colonel.

THE BODY.

Standard-Bearer, supported by two Lieutenants.

Three Adjutants.

But it's really needless to descend thus into particulars. The very order of King Crispin's procession is sufficient to put the whole government to the blush—to say nothing of the difference of cost.

Indeed, I was truly mortified with the infirmities and defects of the whole affair, and was hurrying away from it, when I happened to see Mrs Mashlam with her husband on a booth, and I stoppit to speak to her; but she had seen nothing in the whole concern save only her old friend the Duke of York. "When she saw him going to the abbey with the lave, she rose up as he passed," said Mr Mashlam pawkily, "and made him a courtesy, and the tear shot in her e'e."

I thought by the glance she gave the master at this gibe, that he had treaded rather hard on a tender corn; but she smiled, and, taking him by the hand, made it all up by saying in a kind manner, in the words of the song, "For auld Robin Gray is aye kind to me." I hadna, however, time to spend with them, but hurrying back to the hall, I was almost riven to pieces among a crowd of bardy ladies of quality that had drawn up with gallants when they were in the abbey, and brought them with them, and insisted on taking them in whether the doorkeepers would or no. It was surprising to hear with what birr and smeddum they stood up to the doorkeepers, not a few of them carrying their point

(12) "Ten White Apron Boys."—For them we must count the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners.

with evendown flyting, to the black eclipse of all courtly elegance. Among them I beheld, at last, Dr Pringle in his gown and bands, with Mrs Pringle holding by his arm, toiling and winning, by the sweat of their brows, their way towards the door. They were rejoiced to see me; and the moment they got within the door, the doctor whispered to me with a sore heart, "Oh, yon is a sad remnant of the beast! Far better it were had a man of God, like Samuel, with a pot of ointment in his hand, gone alone to the king in the secrets of the desert, and anointed and hallowed him with prayer and supplication!"

"This is Babylon!—this is Babylon!" cried Mrs Pringle, gay and loud out, at the same time; "but it was a very fine sight, that must be allowed."

The crowd began now so to press upon us, that I was glad to hasten them in, and to get them up beside me in the gallery, where we were scarcely seated when the whole show, as I had seen it on the outside, but in a more confused manner, came into the hall; a stately maiden madam, in a crimson mantle, attended by six misses carrying baskets of flowers, scattering round sweet-smelling herbs, with a most majestical air, leading the van. She was the king's kail-wife, or, as they call her in London, his majesty's herbwoman; and soon after there was a great clamour of trumpets and sonorous instruments, proclaiming, as it were, "God save the king!" all the spectators standing, and the very rafters of the hall dirling in sympathy, for truly it was a wonderful and continuous shout of exultation; and my fine garb of sky-blue, and the ladies' dresses, suffered damage by the dust that came showering down from the vibrating imagery and carvings of the roof, as the king's majesty passed on under his golden canopy of state, and ascended the steps leading to his throne, looking around him, and bowing to every body. Both me and Doctor Pringle, as well as the mistress, thought he cognized us in a most condescending manner; and here I must say for his majesty, that he certainly did his part in a more kingly manner than Andrew Gilbert, who performed King Crispin; never forgetting himself, but behaving throughout most stately and gracious, though often most grievously scomphisht with the heat and the crowd—the which was not the case with Andrew,

poor fellow, as I saw myself from Mrs Micklewraith's windows in the Gallowgate, where, in passing, having occasion to blow his nose, instead of applying to the page that carried for him a fine white pocket-napkin, he made use of his fingers for that purpose, which was surely a very comical outbreaking of the natural man from aneath the artificial king.

As I was looking at his sacred majesty with his crown and robes, I thought of a worthy lady that told me of what she had herself once witnessed, of his father's behaviour in the house of parliament. "I was there," said Mrs Clinker, "with Mr Clinker and our five dochters, to see the solemnities of the robing-room, in the House of Lords; and there was a great congregation of other ladies, with some gentlemen to keep them in countenance. A most genteel company we were, and all sitting in the greatest composity, waiting, like the ten virgins in the parable, some of us wise, and some foolish, but we had no lamps, when the cry arose that the king was coming. Then first came ae lord and syne another, and then the Duke of York bounced among us with a troubled countenance, walking backwards and forwards like a ramping lion, which made us all sit with quaking hearts, as you may well think; next came the king himsel', honest man, talking to his nobles, and they had all faces of great terror. It was just a prodigy to see what a fear they were in; but his majesty was never dismayed, keeping up a blithe heart. However, we began among ourselves to dread that surely something was the matter; and by and by it spunkit out that the king had been shot at with a treasonable gun, that went off without powther. Oh! what I suffered, to know and hear that we were sitting on a gunpowder plot, and that Mr Clinker, with me and my five dochters, might be flying in the air, clapping our hands in despair, like peelings of onions, before we kent whar we were. But the king saw the distress that all the ladies were in, and put on a jocose demeanour, and talked to his lords as they put the robes about his shoulders—the crown he put himsel' on his own head with his own hands, and, when he had done so, he turned round to let us all see him, and he really looked like a king as he was, and his tongue never lay."

I'll no take it upon me to say that the behaviour of his pre-

sent majesty, in the latter particular, was like his father's, for he is a newer-fashioned man, and hasna yet had such an experience of kingcraft; but if, in other and more serious concerns, he can port himself as much to the purpose as the auld king, we can thole with him, though he shouldna just speak so much to the entertainment of his people.

In the mean time, the peers and prelates, and the minuter members of the procession, took their seats at the table; and I could see that the bishops and aldermen soon began to make long arms towards the eatables, which me and Doctor Pringle thought a most voracious thing of them, and not well bred towards his sacred and anointed majesty, who was undergoing such a great fatigue that day for their advantage and renown to all parts of the earth. I likewise observed a peeress from her seat in the front of the laft opposite to me, speaking vehemently to a fat lord at the table below. I suppose he was her gudeman, by the freedom of her speech, for she was plainly making a remonstrance to him on her being so neglected; for among all the ladies round her, both right and left, to a great expanse, there was not a single gentleman, because they were peeresses, and placed there to sit in state for a help to the show; and then I saw his lordship put some eatable article on a trencher, and it was handed up to pacify her ladyship, and some of her adjacent kimmers.

In this stage of the procedure, during his majesty's absence, I had leisure for a conversation with the doctor and the mistress anent what they had seen in the Abbey, the which I will set down in their own words, my faculty of memory not being of that sort which enables me to give a compendious narration; but, as Mr Sweeties said, by way of encouragement to me to proceed with the enditing of this book—"a great talent in transcribing the personalities of my heroes and heroines."

"Aweel, doctor," quoth I, "and what did you see, and how were ye entertained with the anointing?" The doctor shook his head in a solemn manner, and cogitated some time before he made reply; then he answered and said, "It would not become me, Mr Duffle, to find fault with what the king did in the midst of all his government, as he can do no wrong, and may be, in

my presbyterian simplicity and ignorance, I am no of a capacity to judge; but if yon doing was not popery—the seven-headed, ten-horned popery, that rampaged o’er the back of common sense so long in this land, the darkness of night is the light of day to my eyes, and we are not sitting here in the earthly bunkers of this grand auld ancient hall, but are the mere bubbles of a vision of sleep, and all this pomp and garniture around of no more substance than the wrack of vanity that floats in some poor dreaming natural’s fantastical imagination. Oh! Mr Duffle, a heavy hand has been laid on my spirit this forenoon, to see and witness the protestant king of a protestant people, crossed and creeshed with such abominations of idolatry, and a paternostering of rank and heinous papistry, that ought to have been stoned out of the midst of the Christian congregation that was sinning by witnessing the same. I tried to the uttermost of my ability to keep the wonted composure of my mind, and to note in my remembrance the circumstantialities, but one new head of the beast made its appearance after another, till I quaked with terror. I could scarcely abide to look at that speaking horn the archbishop of Canterbury, who, after all, said no ‘great things;’ as for the prelate that preached, I think he read every word, although holding forth in the very presence of the king’s majesty, who, oppressed with the burden of his royal robes, endured all as well as he could. Two or three times I could plainly see, by the help of a pocket spy-glass a lady lent me, that his majesty was not overly content with some of the doctrines, which gave me a pleasure, although, considering they were but matter of morality, I think he need not have fashed himself about ony such feckless ware of the episcopalian inefficacy, than which nothing can be more innocent in a temporal point of view, although, as you know, and every true believer knows, it is as deadly venom in a spiritual. In short, Mr Duffle, I have no broo of this coronation. But let the sin of it rest at the doors of them that advised it; as for me and my house, we will fear God, and honour the king. But of one thing I am most thankful, to wit, that the papistry of this doing is an English work, and can bring neither sin nor dis-

grace upon the Canaan of Scotland, where the coronation of the kings was ever a most devout and religious solemnity, as I have specially read in the account of what was done at Scone, on the New-year's day of Anno Domini 1651, at the crowning of King Charles, the second of that name—a prince who, according to all history, was not one of the soundest protestants, but who nevertheless conducted himself on that occasion in a most sincere manner, saying to the lord chancellor, when that pious man told him, with all due formality, how his good subjects desired he might be crowned as the righteous and lawful heir of the crown and kingdom, 'I do esteem,' said King Charles, 'the affections of my good people more than the crown of many kingdoms, and shall be ready, by God's assistance, to bestow my life in their defence; wishing to live no longer, than I may see religion and this kingdom flourish in happiness,'—the which was as good a speech as King David himself could have made to the children of Israel, and far better than a profane liturgy out of a book. Then King Charles, having made an end of speaking, was conveyed by his nobles to the kirk of Scone, which was fittingly prepared for the occasion, and Mr Robert Douglas, a minister of Edinburgh, and moderator of the General Assembly, preached a most weighty sermon from Second Kings, chap. xi. verses 12 and 17; and, after the blessing, the king renewed the covenants. First, the national covenant, then the solemn league and covenant, were distinctly read; at the close of which the king, kneeling down upon his bended knees, and holding up his right hand, did take upon him, as it were, at the footstool of his Maker, the solemn vows anent the same.

"When this was done, he then ascended a stage in the middle of the kirk, and the Lord Lyon presented him as the king of Scotland to the people; and the people having testified their acceptance of him as such, he again descended from the stage, and, falling on his knees, the great coronation oath was administered in an awful manner; to the which his majesty replied, 'By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I shall observe and keep all that is contained in this oath'—at

which there was silence and dread in the kirk, and a sensible manifestation of the devout simplicity of our true and reformed religion.

“ Having taken the oath, King Charles was then invested with the types and symbols of royalty ; but there was no creeshy papistry practised there, every thing was done in a spirit or meaning and of understanding, the nobles, one by one, touching the crown on the king’s head, and saying aloud, to the hearing of the people, ‘ By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I shall support thee to the uttermost ;’ and then, holding up their right hands towards heaven, swore to be loyal and true subjects, and faithful to the crown.

“ But what ensued was the grandest solemnity of all, and to the which there was no comparison in the wearisome pater-nostering of this day. When the nobility had sworn their allegiance, the Lord Lyon went forth and declared the obligatory oath to the people ; and all present lifting up their right hands, stretched them towards the king, who was seated on his throne on the stage, and cried with one loud and universal voice, ‘ By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, we become your liegemen, and truth and faith shall bear unto you, and live and die with you, against all manner of folks whatsoever, in your service, according to the national covenant, and solemn league and covenant.’

“ Then the minister addressed himself with the earnest voice of a servant of the King of Kings and the Lord of Glory, and pointed out to the poor frail human creature that had been thus invested with the ensigns and homages of sovereignty, how he was obligated, as the temporal type and representative of Him to whom all thrones and principedoms do pertain, to ettle, to the utmost of his ability, to do that which would be pleasant in the sight of his Heavenly Master, without whose favour he could hope for neither homage, nor honour, nor prosperity, but only confusion of face and sorrow of heart for ever.

“ Far different, ye see, Mr Duffie,” continued the worthy doctor, “ was the old simplicity of our Presbyterian coronation, and deeper the spirit of its symbolic ritual sank into the hearts of the worshipping witnesses. However, as King George is a

member of the English Church, I'll no find fault with what has been done to him this day. But I think it was surely a great omission in the ceremonial, that there was no recognition of him by the people, no covenant on their part to be to him, in all straits and perils, true and faithful lieges; for it, in a manner, must leave him in doubt whether they are yet with a right sincerity his subjects, the which it is the main business of a coronation to verify before the world."

When the doctor had made an end of this edifying account of our Scottish national way of crowning the kings in times past, I turned round to Mrs Pringle, who was sitting at my right hand sucking an oranger, with her satin gown kilted up to save it from the accidental drops of the juice, and enquired at her what was her opinion of the crowning in the Abbey.

"Mr Duffle," said she, "I have got no gude o't; for the doctor, at every new o'ercome o' the ceremony, panted with an apprehension; and when he saw the 'nointing, I was in a terrification that he would speak loud out, and get us both sent to the Tower of London for high treason. But, Mr Duffle, do ye ken the freet of yon doing wi' the oil on the palms of the hand? It's my opinion that it's an ancient charm to keep the new king in the kingdom; for there is no surer way to make a new cat stay at hame, than to creesh her paws in like manner—as we had an experience of, after our flitting from the manse to Hydrabad-house, as we call our new place, in memory of the Cornal's legacy; for Miss Mally Glencairn made us a present of one of Miss Nanny Pedian's black kittlings, which is a radical sorrow, like Miss Nanny's own hardware self—thieving baith in pantry and parlour, when it can get in. Howsomever, Mr Duffle, this business must have cost a power of money; and considering the king's great straits, and the debt that he and his ministers owe to the pesents, out of which, I do assure you, we were glad to get our twa three pounds, for they were never twa days the same—it must be allowed that it is a piece of dreadful extravagance. But the Lord Londonderry, that was the Lord Castlereagh, is surely a genteel man—none more so among all the lords—and I would fain hope he knows where the money is to be had to pay the expense. There he is yonder—that's him with the grand cap of

white feathers, and the blue velvet cloke, to denote that he's in the king's servitude. I hope he's no ordained to be one of the auld blue-gowns. See what a fine band of diamonds he has on his cap. A gentleman told me they were pickit out of the lids of the snuff-boxes that he and his lady got from the Emperor Alexander and the King of France, for putting Boney out of the way, that was sic a potentate to them all. But, Mr Duffle, how is it possible for sic a stack of duds as the king is, to fight in state at the head of his armies, when required, for his crown and kingdom? Howsomever, I 'spose, as by law now-a-days he is not allowt to go to the wars, the parliament winks at him. But can ye think, Mr Duffle, that it's possible all the diamonds on the leddies' heads here are precious stones? The king's crown, I am told, is sprit new, gotten for the occasion, as the old one was found, on an examine, to hae mony false jewels put in to delude the people, the true ones being purloined in times of trouble. But now that the coronation's 'played and done,' can you tell me, Mr Duffle, what's the use o't; for I hae been sitting in a consternation, trying to guess the meaning of a' this going out, and up and doon, and changing swords, and helping the king off and on wi' his clothes—'first wi' his stockings and syne wi' his shoon,' as the sang of Logan Water sings. It may be what the doctor calls a haryglyphical ceremony, but haryglyphical or rabbitifical, I doubt it would take wiser men than Pharoah's or the Babylonian soothsayers to expound it. To be sure it's a fine show, that cannot be denied; but it would have been a more satisfaction to the people had his majesty paraded up and down the streets like your King Crispianus at Glasgow."

While Mrs Pringle was thus descoursing, in her discanting way, in high satisfaction and glee, taking every now and then a suck of her oranger, the head lord chamberlain came with his staff in his hand, arrayed in his robes of crimson-velvet, and wearing his coronet on his head, and ordered the hall to be cleared, turning out, by his own bodily command, every one that lingered on the floor, more particularly the earl marshal's flunkies; for it seems that the lord chamberlain, as I read in my old magazine, is obligated, at a royal coronation, to have a gaw

in the earl's back, and takes this method to show his power and supremacy within the bounds of the hall. But the ceremony was, I could see, not relished by those in the earl marshal's livery, for the most part of them being gentlemen disguised for the occasion, had hoped, under that masquerading, to have egress and ingress both to hall and abbey. However, the disgrace was inflicted in a very genteel manner by the Lord Gwydir, who performed the part of lord chamberlain, throughout the whole ploy, with the greatest ability. Nothing, indeed, of the kind was ever so well done before; for his lordship, unlike his corrupt predecessors, making a profit of the office, did all in his power to render it suitable to the nobility of the three kingdoms, and suppressed the sordid custom of making the royal ancient feast of the king of the realm a pay show, like the wax-work of Solomon in all his glory.

When the hall was cleared in this manner, a bustle about the throne announced that the king was again coming; so we all stood up, and the trumpets sounding, in came his majesty, with his orbs and sceptres, and took his seat again at the table. Then the lower doors were thrown open, and in rode three noble peers on horseback, followed by a retinue of servitors on foot, bearing golden tureens and dishes, which, after some palaver, were placed on the king's table. During this scene, the learned gentlemen of the daily press, above and behind me, were busily writing, which Dr Pringle observing, enquired what they were doing; and when I explained it to him, as I had been told, he noted that the ambassadors of the allied powers were placed over against them, and said, that the thing put him in mind of Belshazzar's feast, the newspaper reporters being to them as the handwriting on the wall. "MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN," said the doctor, in so solemn a manner that I wish the ambassadors could have heard it, as it might have been to them for a warning to their masters. No doubt, however, they were dismayed enough to see the liberty of the press so far ben, and for the first time, too, in a station of recognized honour at a coronation.

When the golden dishes were set before the king, they stood some time untouehed; for his majesty would not permit them to

be uncovered till one of the ministers was got to say the grace. Then the lids were taken off, when, lo and behold! as Mrs Pringle judiciously observed, they contained but commonalities; and surely, as she said, there ought to have been, at least, one pie of singing blackbirds on such a great occasion. However, the king tasted but little of them; it was, therefore, supposed that he had got a refreshment behind the scenes. But we know not the truth of this suppose; and, at the time, I could not but compassionate his majesty in being obligated to eat before such a multitude. It would have spoiled my dinner, and the thought of such discomfort made Doctor Pringle, as he told me himself, pray inwardly that the Lord might never make him a king; a very needless prayer, in my opinion, considering the reverend doctor's great simplicity of parts and talents in the way of policy.

At this time, I discerned a very clever and genteel manner of acting on the part of the Lord Londonderry, who was one of the grandest sights in the show. In marching up the hall with the rest, he took his stance on the platform whereon the throne was placed, and in the wonderment of the time forgot to take off his cap of feathers, although then before the presence of the king's majesty. Some friend at his lordship's elbow observing this, gave him a jog, to put him in mind that it might be thought ill breeding. Any common body like me would have been sorely put out at committing such an oversight; but his lordship, with great ready wit, showing what a pawky diplomatic he is, instead of taking off his cap on the spot, feigned to have some turn to do on the other side of the platform; so he walked past in front of the king, and making his majesty as beautiful a bow as any gentleman could well do, took off his cap, and held it, for the remainder of the time, in his hand.

The first part of the banquet being ended, the sound of an encouraging trumpet was heard—and in came the champion on horseback, in the warlike apparel of polished armour, having on his right hand the Duke of Wellington, and on his left the deputy of the Earl Marshal. But it does not accord with the humility of my private pen to expatiate on such high concerns of chivalry; and I was besides just tormented the whole time by

Mrs Pringle, speering the meaning of every thing, and demonstrating her surprise, that the Duke of Wellington could submit to act such a playactor's part. Really it's a great vexation to have to do with either men or women of such unicorn minds as Mrs Pringle, where there is any thing of a complexity of sense, as there is in that type and image of the old contentious times of the monarchy, shown forth in the resurrection of a champion in a coat of mail, challenging to single combat.

In this conjuncture of the ploy, we were put to a dreadful amazement, by a lady of an Irish stock, as I heard, taking it into her head to be most awfully terrified at the sight of a Highland gentleman in his kilt, and holding his pistol in his hand. The gentleman was Glengarry, than whom, as is well known, there is not, now-a-days, a chieftain of a more truly Highland spirit; indeed it may be almost said of him, as I have read in a book it was said of one Brutus, the ancient Roman, that he is one of the last of the chieftains, none caring more for the hardy mountain race, or encouraging, by his example, the love of the hill and heather. Well, what does the terrified madam do, but set up a plastic to disarm Glengarry, thinking that he was going to shoot the king, and put to death all the blood-royal of the Guelph family, making a clean job o't for the bringing in of the Stuarts again. Then she called to her a knight of the bath, and a young man of slender nature, one of the servitors, and bade them arrest Glengarry. It was well for them all that the Macdonell knew something of courts, and the dues of pedigree, and bridled himself at this hobleshow; but it was just a picture, and a contrast to be held in remembrance, to see the proud and bold son of the mountain—the noble that a king cannot make, for it's past the monarch's power to bestow the honour of a chieftainship, even on the Duke of Wellington, as all true Highlanders well know;—I say, it was a show to see him, the lion of the rock, submitting himself calmly as a lamb to those "silken sons of little men," and the whole tot of the treason proving but a lady's hysteric.*

* The particulars of this ludicrous affair are excellently described in a letter from Colonel Macdonell himself, published in answer to a paragraph in that sagacious newspaper, "The Times," entitled "A Mysterious Circumstance."

After the champion and his companions had made their *exerunt omnes*, as it is written in the Latin tongue in the play-books, there was another coming forth of the high lords on horseback,

When the "mysterious circumstance" was first read in Edinburgh, it was at once known that it could only apply to Glengarry; but a Highlander thought otherwise, from the pistol not being loaded, saying, "By Gote, it couldna be Glengarry, for she's aye loaded." We subjoin the letter:—

"SIR—The alarm expressed by a lady on seeing me in Westminster Hall on the day of his Majesty's coronation, and the publicity which her ladyship judged it becoming to give to that expression of her alarm by means of your paper, I should have treated with the indifference due to such mock heroics in one of the fair sex, but that it has been copied into other papers, with comments and additions which seemed to me to reflect both upon my conduct and the Highland character. I trust, therefore, to your sense of justice, for giving to the public the real history of the 'mysterious circumstance,' as it is termed. I had the honour of a royal duke's ticket for my daughter and myself to see his Majesty crowned, and I dressed upon that magnificent and solemn occasion in the full costume of a Highland Chief, including of course a brace of pistols. I had travelled about 600 miles for that purpose; and in that very dress, with both pistols mounted, I had the honour to kiss my Sovereign's hand, at the levee of Wednesday last, the 25th inst. Finding one of our seats in the hall occupied by a lady on our return to the lower gallery, (whence I had led my daughter down for refreshments,) I, upon replacing her in her former situation, stepped two or three rows further back, and was thus deprived of a view of the mounted noblemen, by the anxiety of the ladies, which induced them to stand up as the horsemen entered, whereupon I moved nearer the upper end of the gallery, and had thereby a full view of his Majesty and the royal dukes upon his right hand. I had been standing in this position for some time, with one of the pilasters in the fold of my right arm, and my breast pistol in that hand pointing towards the seat floor on which I stood, when the champion entered, by which means I hung my body forward in any thing but 'seemingly as if going to present it:' in fact, I had taken it into my hand, in order to relieve my chest from the pressure of its weight, after having worn it slung till then, from four o'clock. It was at this instant that a lady within a short distance exclaimed, 'O Lord, O Lord, there is a gentleman with a pistol!' to which I answered, 'The pistol will do you no harm, madam;' but a second time she cried out, 'O Lord, O Lord, there is a gentleman with a pistol!' This last I answered by assuring her that the pistol was not loaded, but that I would 'instantly retire to my place, since it seemed to give her uneasiness;' and I was accordingly preparing to do so, when accosted by a young knight-errant, and closely followed by two others, likewise in plain clothes, one of whom, the first that began to mob me, (for it merits no other term,) laid his hand on my pistol, still grasped, under a loose glove, in my right hand; and, observing the numbers increase on his side, he asked me to deliver him the pistol. Need I say that, as a Highland Chieftain, I refused his demand with contempt? The second gentleman then urged his friend's suite, but was equally unsuccessful; a Knight of the Grand Cross was then introduced, with all due honours, by the name of Sir Charles, into this

followed by their retinue of poor gentlemen, that have pensions, carrying up the gold dishes for his majesty's table in a most humiliated manner, bowing their heads three times, and coming

petty contention, and he also desired me to give up my pistol to that gentleman; which I flatly refused, but added, that understanding him by his dress, &c., to be a Knight of the Grand Cross, he might have it, if he chose, with all its responsibility; for, as I had already said, 'it was not loaded, and pistols were a part of my national garb in full dress.'

"Again Sir Charles desired me to 'give it that gentleman;' but my answer was, 'No, Sir Charles: You, as a soldier, may have it, as the honour of an officer, and a man of family, will be safe in your hands; but positively no other shall—so take it, or leave it, as you please.' Soon after the Knight Grand Cross had come up, I perceived the gentleman in the scarlet frock, (who appeared to be sent by Lady A——y,) but his conduct was not prominently offensive in this affair. Sir Charles, after the conversation above referred to, took possession of that pistol, the other being always worn by me in its place; and the Knight Grand Cross having first declined my turning up the pan to show that there was no powder in it, I told him I had a daughter under my protection in the hall, and consequently proceeded in that direction, on his signifying a wish that I should retire, adding, 'I have worn this dress at several continental courts, and it never was insulted before.' I begged the favour of his card, (which he had not upon him,) at the same time gave him my name, and the hotel where I lodged, expressing an expectation to see him. Sir Charles at this time begged I would move forward, and I begged of him to proceed in that direction, and that I would follow; this he did a short way, and then halting, requested I would walk first. I said, 'I had no objections, if he followed. However, he and the squire remained a little behind, probably to examine the pistol I had lent Sir Charles, which the latter shortly came up with and restored. Soon after I was seated, I missed my glove, and returned in search of it to the close vicinity of Lady A——, when her gallant squire pledged himself to fetch it to me, if I retired to my seat, and he soon after redeemed his pledge. Mean time, Sir Charles must recollect that I spoke again to him, on my way back, and that I then mentioned to him the name of a near connexion of mine, well known in command of the Coldstream Guards. As neither of these gentlemen have called on me since, I presume they are satisfied that the blunder was not upon my side, and that my conduct would bear itself through. The conclusion of the day went off very pleasantly, and when satiated therewith, my daughter and I drove off amidst many marks of civility and condescension even from strangers, as well as from our own countrymen and acquaintances in the highest rank.

"This, Sir, is the whole history of the absurd and ridiculous alarm. Pistols are as essential to the Highland courtier's dress, as a sword to the English courtier's, the Frenchman, or the German; and those used by me on such occasions are as unstained with powder as any courtier's sword with blood. It is only the grossest ignorance of the Highland character and costume which could imagine that the assassin lurked under their bold and manly form.

"With respect to the wild fantasy that haunted Lady A——'s brain, of danger to his Majesty, I may be permitted to say, that George the Fourth has not

away backward; and when the king had eaten of the dishes, there was a great show of royalty and regality performed by divers dukes and lords of manors—among others, I was pleased to see his grace of Argyle performing the ancient part of his Scottish progenitors, and getting a golden cup for his pains.

I think it was in this crisis of the entertainment that Mrs Pringle pointed out to me, sitting by the head of the peers' table, an elderly man with a most comical wig, and having a coronet over it on his head, just a sport to see. Both the mistress and me wondered exceedingly what he could be; and when we heard him propose to drink the king's health, with one-and-eighty hurras, we concluded he could be no other than the king's George Buchanan on this occasion; and what confirmed us in this notion, was his soon after going up as one privileged, and saying something very funny to his majesty, at which we could see his majesty smiled like a diverted person. Over and above this, he took great liberties with his royal highness the Duke Clarence, at the king's left hand, shaking hands with him in a jokefellow-like manner, and poking and kittling him in the ribs with his forefinger, which was a familiarity that no man in his right mind at the time would have ventured to practise at the royal table, and before the representatives of all the monarchies of Europe, as was there assembled looking on. But when I pointed him out to the doctor, the doctor was terrified at our ignorance, and told us that it was the lord chancellor. I could not, however, believe this, as it is well known the lord chancellor is a

in his dominions more faithful subjects than the Highlanders; and that not an individual witnessed his Majesty's coronation, who would more cheerfully and ardently shed his heart's blood for him, than

"Your humble servant,

"Not 'Macnaughton,' but

"ARD-FLATH SIOL-CHUINN

"MAC-MHIC-ALASTAIR.

"Which may be Anglified

"Colonel Ronaldson Macdonell

"of Glengarry and Clanronald.

"GORDON'S HOTEL, }
"Albemarle Street, July 29." }

most venerable character, and knows better how to behave himself with a gravity when within the light and beam of the royal eye.

But the best part of the ploy was after his majesty had retired; for when he departed, every one, according to immemorial privilege, ran to plunder the table, and the doctor, and me, and Mrs Pringle, made what haste we could to join the hobleshow below, in order to get a share of the spoil. The doctor, at the first attempt, got a golden cup, as he thought, but, och hon, honest man! on an examine it proved to be only timber gilt; as for me, I was content with a piece of a most excellent bacon ham, and a cordial glass or two of claret wine, and a bit seedcake, having fasted for so long a period. Mrs Pringle would fain have had a rug at the royal napery on the king's table, but it was nailed fast. She, however, seized a gilded image of a lady, like what is on the bawbies, with a lion by her side, and not a little jocose the mistress was with it—for it was almost as big as a bairn—wondering and marvelling how she would get it carried home. But, as the doctor observed on the occasion, most uncertain are all earthly possessions. Mrs Pringle happened just for a moment to turn her back on her idol, to take a glass of wine with me, when a bold duchess-looking lady laid hands on the darling Dagon and carried it away to another part of the table, where she sat down triumphing among judges and other great personages, and expatiated over her prize. Poor Mrs Pringle was confounded, and turned up the white of her eyes like a dying doo, with disappointment, and had not the courage to demand back her property, being smitten with a sense, as she afterwards said, of not having come very honestly by it; so the lady carried off the image, as her prize, to her chariot, and a proud woman I trow she was, demonstrating over its beauties to all her acquaintance as she bore it along in her arms, and on her own great good-luck in getting it.

As we were thus employed, Mrs Pringle gave me a nodge on the elbow, and bade me look at an elderly man, about fifty, with a fair grey head, and something of the appearance of a gawsy good-humoured country laird. "Look at that gentleman," said she. "Wha is't?" quo' I. "That's the author of Waverley,"

was her answer; “a most comical novel that the doctor read, and thought was a true history book.”

Seeing myself so nigh to that great literary character, and understanding that there was some acquaintance between him and my friends, I sideled gradually up towards him till he saw the mistress and the doctor, with whom he began to talk in a very conversible manner, saying couthy and kind things, complimenting the doctor on his talents as a preacher, and sympathizing with Mrs Pringle, whose new gown had suffered great detriment by reason of the stour and the spiders’ webs that had fallen down, as I have rehearsed, from the rafters.

By this time, some familiar interchange of the eye had taken place between him and me; and when he understood that my name was Duffle, and that I corresponded in a secret manner with Mr Blackwood, the bookseller in Edinburgh, he said that he had been just like to die at some of my writings, which I was very well pleased to hear; and then I speered at him if he was really and truly the author of “Waverley.” “Mr Duffle,” said he, “I just hae as little to say to the book as you hae.” To the which I replied, “that, if a’ tales be true, that could be nae lie.” “But we ken,” cried Mrs Pringle, “that ye are the author, though ye may have reasons, in black and white, o’ your ain for the concealment.” “Na,” quoth the doctor, “that’s, I must say, a hame push; but, no doubt, when a decent man denies a charge o’ the kind, it ought to be believed.” In this easy manner we stood conversing for a season, and then we sat down on the steps leading up to the king’s throne, and had some jocose talk anent what we had seen, and other sights and shows of regal pageantry, the which, by little and little, led us on to speak of past times, and the doings of kings and queens who have long departed this life, till at last we entered upon the connexion and pedigree of his majesty with the old tyrannical house of Stuart. My new acquaintance, however, did not much relish the observe that I made concerning the prelatie nature of the princes of that line.

After this sederunt we rose, and the disappointment of the golden image was not the only dejection that Mrs Pringle was ordained to meet with that night. Both the doctor and her had

forgotten to make proper regulations about Captain Sabre's carriage, which was to take them home; so that, after waiting till the hall was almost skaled, and many of the lights out, we three, in all our finery, were obligated to walk out into the streets, and no hackney was to be seen or heard of. What with the gravel hurting her feet, and the ruin it was of to her satin shoes, Mrs Pringle was at the greeting; and some drops of rain beginning to fall, her new gown was in the very jaws of jeopardy. But she is a managing woman, and not often at a loss;—seeing the doctor and me standing overcome with perplexity, and in a manner demented, she happened to observe a gentleman's carriage at a door, and, without more ado, she begged the servant to ask their master to allow them to take her home, which he very readily did, and thus extricated us all from a most unspeakable distress; for both the doctor and me got into the chaise beside her, and arrived safe at Captain Sabre's, where there was a great assemblage of friends, and a wonderful speer and talk about what we had all seen that day at the Coronation.

When we had rested ourselves a short space of time, and taken some refreshment, the doctor and me (he having put off his gown and bands) went out by ourselves on our feet, it being no length of a walk from Baker Street to Hyde-Park, to see the fire-works, things which the doctor had never seen, but which were no unco to me, as we have had sicklike at Glasgow from riders and equestrian troops. But this, at that time of night, was not a very judicious adventure, considering that I was in my sky-blue court dress, with a cockit hat and a sword; for it brought the voices of the commonality. I, however, could have put up with them; but just as we got into the crowd, there was a great flight of sky-rockets, with a fearful rushing noise, which so terrified Doctor Pringle, that he thought it was a fiery judgment breaking out of the heavens upon London for the idolatries of the day—and uttered such a cry of fright, that every body around us roared and shouted with laughter and derision; inso-much, that we were glad to make the best of our way homeward. But our troubles did not then end. Before we were well out of the Park, an evendown thunder-plump came on, that not only drookit the doctor to the skin, but made my sky-blue silk clothes

cling like wax to my skin; and, in the race from the rain, the sword gaed in between my legs, and coupit me o'er in the glaur of the causey with such vehemence, that I thought my very een were dinted out; the knees of my silk breeks were riven in the fall. Some civil folk that saw my misfortune, helped me in with the doctor to an entry mouth, till a hackney could be got to take me home. In short, the sufferings I met with are not to be related, and I had an experience of what it is to be stravaigging after ferlies at the dead hour of the night; for when I reached Mrs Damask's house, she was gone to bed, and nobody to let me in, dripping wet as I was, but an ashypet lassie that helps her for a servant. No such neglect would have happened with Mrs M'Lecket in the Saltmarket. She would have been up to see to me herself, and have had the kettle boiling, that I might get a tumbler of warm toddy after my fatigues. But I was needcessitated to speel into my bed as well as I could, shivering with the dread of having got my death of cold, or of being laid up as a betheral for life with the rheumatics.

CHAPTER XI.

ON the morning after the coronation, I found myself in a very disjaskit state, being both sore in lith and limb, and worn out in my mind with the great fatigue I had undergone, together with a waff of cold that had come upon me, no doubt caused by that disaster of the thunder-plump that drookit me to the skin, as I have rehearsed at length in the foregoing chapter. I was thereby constrained to keep my lodgings for a day; and Mrs Damask was wonderful attentive, and sparing in no pains to get me pleased and comfortable. However, by and by, I came to my ordinar, and then I went about to see the sights, being, in the mean time, much solaced with occasional visitations from that most worthy divine, Doctor Pringle. He was indeed to me a friend among strangers in that foreign land of London, and

took a pleasure in letting me know, from his past experience, what was most becoming of notice and observation.

The first place of note that I went to see, was the Gardens of Vauxhall; and I had for my companion Mr Ettle, a Greenock gentleman, that I had dined with in the house of Mr Tartan, my friend and correspondent in that town. He was a busy man, seeing all sort of things. I trow no grass grew beneath his feet on the plainstones of London; for he considered it his duty, having come to visit the metropolis as a party of pleasure, to spare no trouble in compassing the ends of his journey.

Going with Mr Ettle to the masquerade at Vauxhall, ilk in a domino, which is just like a minister's gown, and with black false faces on, when we were paying our money at the door for admittance, we saw before us a little, fat, and round lady, and a gentleman in the same guise and garb as ourselves; and following them in, the lady, when she beheld the lamps and bowers and arbours, cried out, with a shrill voice of admiration, "Eh, Gordon's Loan, Prussia Street! Sawney Sowans, what's tat? was ever sic a sight seen!" By the which ejaculation, we discerned that this was a Paisley woman, and Mr Ettle said he knew them well, they being no other than Mr and Mrs Sowans from that town.—"We'll get some fun out of them, so keep close at their heels," said he.

With that we walked behind them, listening to their discourse, and to every "Gordon's Loan, Prussia Street," with which the mistress testified her wonderment at the ferlies of the place. "I'm confoundit, Sawney Sowans, at the lights and lamps. Eh! Gordon's Loan, Prussia Street! luk up, luk up, can yon be booits too?" and she pointed to the starns in the firmament with a jocosity that was just a kittling to hear.

By and by, after parading from one part of the Gardens to another, hearkening to the music here, and looking to ladies and gentlemen dancing there, we entered into a most miraculous round room, with divers other halls and places, as if built up by a geni, and stood before a batch of foreign musicants, that were piping on the Pan's pipe, nodding their heads in a most methodical manner, and beating drums and triangles at the same time. Mr and Mrs Sowans were just transported to

see this, and the gudeman said to her, as he turned to go away --“It’s all in my eye.”—“What’s a’ in your eye?” quo she.—“It’s just clockwork,” said he; at which she gave a skirl of pleasure, and cried, “Na, na, gudeman, ye’re glammered there, for they’re living images of human creatures like oursel’s.”

The crowd had now assembled in great numbers. In going out of one room into another, the mistress was divided from cleeking with her husband, and Mr Ettle seeing this, pushed in and kittled her under the oxter—“O, Sawney Sowans o’ Paisley! whar are ye? Come here, come here, for a man’s meddling wi’ me.” The which shout of terrification caused a loud uproar of laughter, that was just a sport to enjoy. But after it, Mr Ettle made himself known as a friend; for Mrs Sowans was sincerely frightened, and it behoved him to pacify her, by telling that what he had done was but a masquerading for diversion. Some exchange of discourse anent London and the crowning of the king then ensued; and Mr and Mrs Sowans telling where they bided, invited both me and Mr Ettle to come and see them in their lodgings, the mistress saying in her couthy way to me, “I hope, Mr Duffle, ye’ll no neglec to gie me a ca’ before ye lea the toon;” which I promised with meikle good-will, for Mrs Sowans is in the main a decent woman, and no given to hide her pedigree, as was shown by her to the minister of the parish when the maister biggit his new house. “I can sit at the window,” said Mrs Sowans, “and see sax houses where I was in servitude, and no ane o’ them a’ half so good or so bien as my ain.”

When we had paraded, as I have said, for a season, we then went into an alcove and had a small bowl of punch; and here I must notice an uncivil thing on the part of Mr Ettle, for when I was sitting resting myself, he slippit away out and left me my leaful lane. Where he went, and whom he forgathered with, he kens best himsel’, for I never saw hilt or hair of him more that night. So I began to grow eerie at being solitary in an unkent multitude, and coming to the yett of the gardens, hired a hackney that took me home to Mrs Damask’s in perfect safety, by half an hour past eleven o’clock. The mistress marvelled at seeing me so soon from Vauxhall, and thought I had surely met **with**

some great misfortune, either in purse or person, and could not divine how it was possible that I could be uneasy at Vauxhall.

The night following I went to hear the music in the Opera—a most surprising playhouse—and I sat down beside Mr Ettle, whom I saw in the pit. I had not, however, been long there, when a most beautiful and fine lady came and clinkit herself to my side, saying, “Eh! save’s, Mr Duffle, what’s brought you frae the Saut-market to London? and how’s Mrs M’Lecket?”—I was, as may well be supposed, in a consternation at this cordiality from a personage that was a match for a countess, and looked for a space of time in amazement.—“Do ye no ken me?” cried the madam, “I’m Jenny Swinton, that was wee lass to your neighbour Mr Sweeties.”—And sure enough it was the same glaikit girлие. She had a misfortune, that she gied the wyte o’ to some o’ our neer-do-weel gentlemen; but after this she fell into an open course of immorality, till she made Glasgow ouer het to hold her. Then she went into Edinburgh; and syne, having gathered some ladylike cleeding, she spoused her fortune, and set out to try her luck in London, where, as I could learn, she was well treated as an innocent country maiden, both by lords and gentlemen of high degrees. To do the poor creature justice, however, I am bound to say she was very glad to see me, and requested me very warmly to come to her house in London Street, and take my tea with her. And Doctor Pringle, to whom I mentioned the adventure next day, advised me to go, and offered himself to accompany me, in the hope that, by our exhortations, Jenny might be persuaded to eschew the error of her way. But I had a notion that the invitation was all a trick of Mr Ettle’s, to draw me into a situation with this strange woman; for they seemed to be very thick thegither, though he pretended that he didna ken her.

The more I saw of the great Tarshish, my spirit was filled with wonder, and borne onward with a longing for new things. Finding it was not convenient to go home for my dinner when I was in a distant part of the town, I dropped into the nearest coffee-house when I felt an inclination to eat—and by this means I sometimes forgathered with strange persons, deeply read in the mysteries of man.

THE EFFIGIES.

Among others, I one day, when I felt the wonted two o'clock pinkling in my belly, stepped into an eating-house to get a check of something, and sat down at a table in a box where an elderly man, of a salt-water complexion, was sitting. Having told the lad that was the waiter what I wanted, I entered into discourse with the hard-favoured stranger. His responses to me were at first very short, and it seemed as if he had made up his mind to stint the freedom of conversation. But there was a quickened intelligence in his eye which manifested that his mind neither slumbered nor slept. I told him that I was come on purpose to inspect the uncos in London, and how content I was with all I saw; and my continued marvel at the great apparition of wealth that seemed to abound every where. "I think," said I, "that it's only in London a man can see the happiness of the British nation."—"And the misery," was his reply. This caustical observe led to further descant anent both sides of the question, until he opened up, and showed that his reserve was but a resolution—not habitual, nor from the custom of his nature. "The least interesting things about this town," said he, "to a man who looks deeper than the outside of the packing-case of society, are the buildings—the wealth—and the appearance of the people. The pre-eminence of London consists in the possession of a race of beings that I call the Effigies. They resemble man in action and external bearing; but they have neither passions, appetites, nor affections. Without reason, imagination, or heart, they do all things that men do; but they move onward to the grave, and are covered up in the parent and congenial clay, with as little regret by those who knew them best, as you feel for the fate of that haddock you are now about to eat."

"And what are thae things?" was my diffident answer. "Why," says he, "they are for the most part foundlings of fortune—beings without relations—adventurers who, at an early period of life, perhaps begged their way to London, and raised themselves, not by talent or skill, but by a curious kind of

alchemy, into great riches. I have known several. They are commonly bachelors—bachelors in the heart. They live in a snug way, have some crony that dines with them on Sunday, and who knows as little of their affairs as of their history. The friendship of such friends usually commences in the Hampstead or Hackney stage-coaches, and the one is commonly a pawn-broker and the other a banker. The professions of such friendshipless friends are ever intrinsically the same; nor can I see any difference between the man who lends money on bills and bonds, and him who does the same thing on the widow's wedding ring or the clothes of her orphans. They both grow rich by the expedients of the necessitous or the unfortunate. They make their money by habit, without motive, and they bequeath it to some charity or public character, merely because they are, by the force of custom, required to make a will. I am a traveller, I know something of all the principal cities of Europe, but in no other has the Effigian species any existence. Their element consists of the necessities of a commercial community, which embraces all the other vicissitudes to which mankind are ordinarily liable.

“One of the most decided, the purest blood of the Effigies, was the late old Joe Brianson. Whether he begged or worked his way to London is disputed; but he commenced his career as a porter.—No one ever heard him mention the name of any of his kin; perhaps he had some good reason for the concealment.—The first week he saved a crown, which he lent to a brother bearer of burdens who was in need, on condition of receiving six shillings on the Saturday following.—In the course of the third week after his arrival, he was worth one pound sterling;—and he died at the age of seventy-eight, leaving exactly a million, not taking out of the world one idea more than he brought into London fifty-six years before;—and yet the history of Joe would be infinitely more interesting and important than that of all the men of fame and genius that ever existed. For although he was, in the truest sense of the times, a usurious hunk, he was never drawn into one transaction against the statutes. I knew him well in my younger years, for I had often occasion to apply to him. I was constituted

somewhat differently, and, without being so good a member of society, I do not say much for myself when I affirm that I was a better man. Joe was most faithful to his word—his promise was a bond; but, like a bond, it always contained a penalty. ‘If this bill,’ he used to say, ‘is not pointedly taken up, I promise you it will be heard of;’ and when it was not taken up, it was heard of, and that too with a vengeance. He never gave a groat in charity, because he never had one to give. He lived all his days as literally from hand to mouth as when he entered London without a penny. If you wanted a bill discounted, he never did it off-hand. He had all his own cash previously put out at usury, and was obliged to apply to his bankers. They got at the rate of five per cent per annum. Joe agreed to sell some article of merchandize to his customer—and the price he put on it left him not less in general than five per cent per month upon the principal of the bill discounted. But the wealth he thus gathered might almost be said to have been un-blessed, for it brought him no new enjoyment. At the age of threescore, and possessed of half a million, he was taken ill with vexation in consequence of a clerk dying insolvent, who had been in his service three-and-twenty years, and to whom he had discounted a bill for twenty pounds in anticipation of his salary; the poor man being at the time under the necessity of submitting to an operation for the stone.

“Joe married when he was about fifty. His wife was the daughter of a man with whom he had formed an acquaintance in the Islington stage-coach. She was beautiful and accomplished, and beloved by a handsome young butcher; but educated at a fashionable boarding-school, the butcher’s trade was unsavoury to her imagination. Her own father was a nightman—a dealer in dunghills. There is some difference between a banker and a butcher; and old sordid Joe was on that account preferred to the young butcher by the nightman’s daughter. They begat a son and a daughter. The former, at the age of twenty-two, was elected into parliament by his father’s purse. The latter, at the age of nineteen, was married by the same potentiality to an earl. Joe died—his son and daughter put their servants into mourning when he ceased to discount; and in less

than three months after gave them new liveries, in honour of their mother's second marriage.

"There are no such beings as these in any other capital of Europe, and yet they are common in London. Father, mother, son, and daughter, belong to a peculiar species, and it would be a libel on human nature to rank them with the race of man."

Here I could not refrain from saying to the strange man, having by this time well finished my dinner, that I thought he had a sour heart towards the sons and daughters of success and prosperity. "No," says he, "you misunderstand me. I was only speaking of the Effigies, a species of the same genus as man, but widely different in the generalities of their nature."

I could not say that this story left any satisfaction with me, which the rehearser observing, said, "But the Effigies are perhaps not so remarkable as another class, of a very opposite description.—I do not well know by what epithet to distinguish them; but if you will join me in a bottle of wine, I will give you some account of one of them, and the tale may be called 'The Broken Heart.'" This was a very agreeable proposal to me, who had no other end in view at the time but my own recreation; so we ordered in one of the landlord's old bottles—during the drinking of which my companion proceeded to the following effect:—

THE BROKEN HEART.

There are but two kinds of adventurers who succeed in London—those who, like Joe Brianson, come to it penniless, with industrious propensities, and those who have friends of power and influence. Young men, brought up as gentlemen in the country, rarely prosper in London; and it is of one of these I would now speak. The person I allude to was the son of a clergyman. He was known among his companions by the nickname of Buskin; and his unhappy fate makes me remember him by no other.

He was one of a large family.—His father, however, had a good living; but it was unfortunately in a genteel neighbour-

hood, and the sons and daughters in consequence acquired notions of elegance inconsistent with their fortune. While the old man lived, this produced no evil. At his death, the whole family was plunged into poverty. By that time, however, Buskin, who had come to London as a clerk, was settled in a business, which, while there was no other drain on it than his own expenses, was adequate, it appeared, to all his wants, notwithstanding his extra-gentility.—But, from the time he was necessitated to contribute to the support of his brothers and sisters, his efforts were unavailing to make it sufficiently productive; and a change was soon perceptible in his appearance. Previously he had been rather a sedate character—something given to reflection and sentiment. He wrote poetry, and played on the flute. But soon after the arrival of his friends in town, he became remarkably gay—forswore, it would seem, the Muses—and entered with something of an inordinate keenness into every species of cheerful amusement. He was praised for this. It was thought he had the interests of his sisters in view—and courted society, to give the gentlemen of his acquaintance an opportunity of knowing their worth and beauty; for they were lovely, amiable, and accomplished to an uncommon degree. This, however, was but the first stage of the mortal malady with which poor Buskin was seized.

The symptoms of gayety and good-humour continued about a year, when others began to appear. In his dress and manners the patient still seemed the same individual; but his temper became sharp and irritable. He was satisfied with nothing; the sun itself never shone properly; when he went into the fields, the west wind had lost its genial freshness, and the blossoms that garlanded the boughs in spring, seemed to him tawdry. The song of the lark was harsh in his ears; and he was heard often to repine at the lot of the day-labourer, whose anxieties terminated with the hours of his task, and who had none beyond the daily period of his toil.

At first this attracted no particular notice, or, when it was noticed, it only seemed to provoke the banter of his friends; but the misanthropic humour continued to grow, and at last it began to be surmised that his affairs were not thriving. I never obtrude

my advice; but one day, when he was unusually petulant, I could not refrain from remarking to him the alteration I have mentioned, and to express my fears.

"You are right," replied he, "in some respects. My affairs are, indeed, not thriving, or rather, they are not adequate to supply the demands of duty and affection. In other respects, I have no reason to complain."—"Then, why don't you abridge your expense? You do not want resolution on other occasions; why would you go with your eyes open over the precipice?"—"I do not like," said he, "to loose the footing I possess in society; and I hope that something may come round to help me."

There was an accent of sorrow in the use of that word *help*, that rang upon my heart. I could say no more; I had it not in my power to assist the unfortunate man; I could only pity, and mark the progress of his consuming anguish, as one friend contemplates another dying of a consumption.

But the period of irritation and bitterness also passed, and was succeeded by another more deplorable. He became again singularly animated—his whole mind seemed to be endowed with preternatural energy. In amusement and in business he was equally inexhaustible: all with whom he took a part in either, admired his vigour, and complained of that amazing activity which left their utmost exertions and efforts so far behind. I was awed and alarmed: I looked at him with astonishment. His voice, in conversation, when any thing like argument was started, became irresistibly eloquent. There was a haste in the movements of his mind, as if some great countervailing weight had been taken away. One evening, in returning with him from a party where this had been remarkably the case, I said to him familiarly, "Buskin, what the devil's the matter with you? you seem as if your thoughts were in a hurry."—"They are so," he replied, "and they have cause, for they are haunted by a fiend."

I was horrorstruck; but what could I say? I attempted to remonstrate, but he shut my mouth. "It is now too late to reason with me—the struggle will soon be over. I feel that I am left to myself—that the protection of Providence is withdrawn, and hope is extinguished. Wherever I move, I am, as it

were, in a magical circle. I never come any more into contact with humanity. I am excommunicated."

Although I was grieved and terrified by this rhapsody, I yet thought it advisable to ridicule it, when, in a moment, he struck me violently in the face. My blood was ever inflammable at the slightest insult; but this blow smote my heart with indescribable pain, and, so far from feeling any thing like resentment at the insult, I could not refrain from bursting into tears, and taking the irritated young man by the hand. It was too dark for me to see his face; but, when I pressed his hand, I felt that his whole frame shuddered. Nothing more passed that night. I accompanied him home to his own door, and we parted without speaking, but shook hands in a way that said more to the spirit than the tongue could have uttered. On reaching my lodgings, I sat down, and my thick-*arising* fancies would not allow me to go to bed. At last they got so far the better of me, that I went again out and walked to Buskin's house. All was silent there. I passed two or three times in front, and then went home; but the nightmare was upon me, and the interval till morning was hideous. At an earlier hour than usual, I rose and dressed myself, and again went into the street where my unhappy friend resided. As I approached towards his door, I was startled by a medical gentleman, one of our mutual friends, coming out. * * *

At this point of his story, the hard-favoured stranger's voice faltered, and drawing his hand hastily over his face, he abruptly rose, and went to the door. In the course of a few minutes, during the which I was in a state of rumination, he returned, and calling the waiter, asked what was to pay for the wine; and, throwing down his half of the reckoning, bade me good afternoon, and went away, leaving me to guess and ponder anent the sad and mournful issue of his tale.

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN I had abundantly satisfied my curiosity with the curious things of London, I was admonished by my purse, which had suffered a sore bowel complaint from the time of my arrival, that it behoved me to think of taking it to grass and replenishment in the Saltmarket. Accordingly, after settling counts with Mrs Damask, I got a hackney to carry my portmanty to the wharf, where I embarked on board the Mountaineer steam-boat, bound, God willing, to the port of Leith.

I had not been long on board, when, lo and behold! who should I see flourishing his cane, but that nice, good-tempered, fat man, the great Odontist, whose genius and talents in the abstruse art of song-writing, make such a figure in "Blackwood's Magazine."

"Hey, doctor!" quo' I, at length—"Heh, sirs, but a sight of you here is gude for sair een—whar d'ye come frae?"

The doctor, who is a paukie loon, as is well kent, said nothing at first, but looking as it were down at me with an inquisitive and jealousing e'e, cried out, in his funny way, "Whar did that creature speak frae? Lordsake, Tammy Duffle, how came ye here? What's ta'en you a gallanting out o' the Saltmarket? I thought the Gallowgate would hae been the farthest o' your tramps. But ye hae nae doubt been up wi' a cargo o' your loyalty to the coronation. Lordsake, man, but I am glad to see you! I have nae had the visibility o' a Christian face since—the heavens kens when, Tammy."

In this way the Odontist for a space o' time continued his mirthful devices, till the vessel was put under way by the steam being set on, when we had some solid conversation thegither—in the first place, anent the news from Glasgow, of which the doctor was in great want, by reason of his long absence; and in the second, concerning the doctor's experience and observes on the kingdom of France, and the city of Paris, appertaining thereto.

"And so ye hae been at Paris, doctor?" quo' I; "ye maun gie me a sober account of what ye saw; and I request that ye'll begin at the beginning, when you left London."

“It was fine weather,” replied the doctor: “there wasna a mot in the lift till we got ayont Canterbury. There I saw twa droll black clouds fleeing aboon a hill—corbie-like things—I didna like the looks o’ them—the devil’s yonder in the air, quo’ I—and we soon fan’ the truth o’t. He flappit his wings, and brought on a perfect hurricane, when we were in the packet. The vessel heel’d ouer till I thought she would hae coupit, and made a clean whamle o’t. Lordsake, it was dreadful! and a poer bit German princey that we had on board, I thought would hae decanted his inside. At every bock, he shot out his neck and open mouth as if he would hae swallow’t the sun out o’ the firmament like a peel. Lordsake, what a creighling the creature made, raxing and hauding its sides! Its man was obliged to grip it by the tail, for fear it would hae loupn out o’ the ship in its desperation. But a’ was nothing to Paris. Lordsake, Tammy, but yon is a whirligig-place; a’ the folk are daft, and they mak every body sae that gangs there! At our tabledot, fifty-eight dined every day; twenty were Glasgow folk, a very extraordinary thing; we sang Great George is King, wi’ hands cleekit, after dinner. The French thought we were mad; but we were very civil to them, and after the King’s health we drank auld Loui, and had Henry Quatre. But the cookery was damned bad—they don’t know how to cook yonder—they have no gout—they boil the meat to tavers, and mak sauce o’ the brue to other dishes—they have nothing savoury or solid—but for a’ that they are desperate eaters—Lordsake, what trash it is they eat!—I have seen them sitting at their supper, with their yellow faces, like puddocks round a plate, crunching custocks. There can be nae comfort in yon way o’ living. They breakfast in public coffee-rooms, and spend a’ the day as if they had nothing to do, and their nights in that hell upon-yearth the Palace-Royal;—Lordsake, Tammy, yon is an awfu’ place! I was just terrified to gie a keek in—for a’ that, I tried to see every thing. But if ye take awa’ the palaces and other public buildings, there’s naething to be seen in Paris—a filthy town—ye might crack a whip out o’ ae window intil anither in the house fornent. But for a’ that, the French have some clever points of character—their silks are very extraordinary, and

really very cheap; but I didna smuggle ony, because I had nae need. But in their churches the villany of man was manifest; it wasna that ony body was there; the priests said their ridiculous paternosters in a manner to themselves, for they had nae hearers. Heaven knows what will come o' them when they die!—they ken naething o' the Lord, but a deal o' the deevil—and yet yon Peer la Shaize is a very beautiful place, adorned with flowers. They have flowers in glass boxes on some headstones for the ghosts at night to look at—it's, however, a pretty sight to see them. But there are many other places besides yon burying-ground very comfortable in Paris. The coffee-room o' a' ithers that I thought the most sae, was ane at the Luxemburg—and the vin ordinair is excellent, only fifteenpence the bottle—pleasure's very cheap, for which cause so many of our countrymen go yonder. They repute that more than fifty thousand English souls are at this time in Paris. But I'm sure I wonder what they see at the French—a whirligig set of deevils—nae stability in them—and, Lordsake, what a clatter the bodies hae! no end, nor method either, in their discourse—and nothing cordial and sincere about them—their friendship's but lip-deep, and, like their cookery, has nae fushion in't—a' show. Ye canna cut and come again on their kindness—but the bodies hae a civil way with them for a' that, and it's no possible to be angry at their parleyvoos. I stayed three weeks amang them, and hae nae reason to complain—but it's just a miracle to see how the creatures can gab and eat; ye would think they hadna got a wholesome meal o' meat a' their days before, and that their tongues were just loosened by a thaw; their words come running out o' their mouths like a burn at Beltane; they hae no end. Unless ye can speak French, ye ken nae mair what they hae been saying when they are done, than when they began."

"But, doctor," said I, "how did you find public opinion? What state are the Bonapartists in? Chopfallen, no doubt."

"Confoundit moudiwarts!—They durstna show their snouts where I was. Thumourts, that would sook the blood o' auld honest Loui's cocks and hens.—But a's loyalty yonder noo. The Jacobin trade's clean up and dished. They're a' broken—gane to pigs and whistles—like the Whigs amang oursel's."

“That may be the case at present, doctor, but when the king dies”——

“The king dee!—Yon’s a hale and gawsy carle—meat-like and claith-like—aiblins now and then fashed wi’ a bit gimbletting o’ the gout in his muckle tae—but what o’ that? I hae’t whiles mysel’, and ne’er a prin the waur o’t. Na, na!—there’s nae dead-ill about Loui. Lordsake, Tammy! what gars you think that fat folk are mair death-like than skinny deevils like yoursel’? It may be that, in het summer weather, we’re obliged to thole mair; but flesh is no an ill cleeding for banes in winter. Dinna even ony o’ your *memento more’s* to the like o’ Loui and me, Tammy; as lang as we baith can eat and drink as we hae done, a snuff o’ tobacco for death. Na, na!—Depend upon’t, Tammy, Loui will wag his staff at the auld loon, and gar him chatter his hungry rat-trap teeth, without a morsel, for many a day to come yet. As for a squabash when he does kick, wha’s to make it? Lordsake, man, but ye hae got in the Blues!—Deevil’s in the man; would he no hae fat folk to live?”

“But, doctor, what think ye of the hospitality in France?”

“Hospi—what, in France?” cried the Odontist, looking at me as if his eyes were pistols. “Gruel and purge is a’ that yon gabby creatures ken o’ hospitality.”

This ingenious observe naturally led me to think of the state of the learned science in France.

“Science!” cried the doctor. “Gin clockleddies and bum-bees, wi’ prins in their douns, be science, atweel there’s an abundance o’ that at the Garden of Plants. But the elephant yonder is really a prime beast, and has sic comical cunning een, I dinna wonder at philosophy making a pet o’ the creature—just as Kit North does o’ me. But bide till I get my Journal ready for Blackwood—so hae done wi’ your pumping.”

While we were thus holding a jocose conversation, a gentleman that had the look of a divine joined in with us, and he, being taken with the doctor’s funny sayings, began to strive at something of the sort himself; and upon his suggestion the doctor and him and me retired to a corner by ourselves, where the Odontist called on the steward to bring us a bottle of the port out of his basket of sea-stores; for the doctor, being a man of a

jolly as well as a jocose humour, had laid in a plentiful extra supply of divers sorts of good wines.

This stranger turned out to be no other than the Rev. Mr Birkwhistle, the minister of Dintonknow. He is an elderly man, of a composed appearance, with something, however, of a peery-weery twinkling about the een, which betrayed that he knew more than he let on. He had been at London on some gospel affair anent the call of a minister ; but whether he had been on the leet, and wasna successful, or merely as a visitant—aiblins to spy the nakedness of the land—I'll no take it upon me to say ; but he had a fouth of queer stories, which it was a curiosity to hear of in the manner that he discoursed of the same. Among others, he told us of a very surprising thing that befell himself.

THE WIG AND THE BLACK CAT.

By an agreement with the session, (said Mr Birkwhistle,) I was invited to preach the action sermon at Kilmartin, and my new wig coming home from Glasgow by the Saltecoats carrier on the Thursday afore, I took it unopened on the Saturday evening in the box to the manse, where I was to bide during the preachings with the widow. It happened, however, that in going in the stage-fly from my own parish to Kilmartin, a dreadful shower came on, and the box, with my new wig thereintil, being on the outside tap of the coach, the wind blew and the rain fell, and by the help and colleaguery of the twa, the seams of the box were invaded, and the wig, when I took it out on the Saturday night, was just a clash o' weet.

At that time o' night, there wasna a barber to be had for love or money within three miles o' the manse ; indeed, I dinna think, for that matter, there was a creature o' the sort within the bounds and jurisdictions of the parish, so that I could make no better o't than to borrow the dredge-box out of the kitchen, and dress the wig with my own hands.

Although Mr Keckle had been buried but the week before, the mistress, as a' ministers' wives of the right gospel and evangelical kind should be, was in a wholesome state of composity ;

and seeing what I was ettling at, said to me, the minister had a blockhead whereon he was wont to dress and fribble his wig, and that, although it was a sair heart to her to see ony other man's wig upon the same, I was welcome to use my freedoms therewith. Accordingly, the blockhead on the end of a stick, like the shank of a carpet besom, was brought intil the room; and the same being stuck into the finger-hole of a buffet-stool, I set myself to dress and fribble with my new wig, and Mrs Keckle the while sat beside me, and we had some very edifying conversation indeed.

During our discoursing, as I was not a deacon at the dressing of wigs, I was obligated now and then to contemplate and consider the effect of my fribbling at a distance, and to give Mrs Keckle the dredge-box to shake the flour on where it was seen to be wanting. But all this was done in great sincerity of heart between her and me; although, to be sure, it was none of the most zealous kind of religion on my part, to be fribbling with my hands and comb at the wig, and saying at the same time with my tongue orthodox texts out of the Scriptures. Nor, in like manner, was it just what could be hoped for, that Mrs Keckle, when I spoke to her on the everlasting joys of an eternal salvation, where friends meet to part no more, saying, "a bit pluff with the box there on the left curls," (in the way of a parenthesis,) that she wouldna feel a great deal; but for all that, we did our part well, and she was long after heard to say, that she had never been more edified in her life than when she helped me to dress my wig on that occasion.

But all is vanity and vexation of spirit in this world of sin and misery. When the wig was dressed, and as white and beautiful to the eye of man as a cauliflower, I took it from off its stance on the blockhead, which was a great shortsightedness of me to do, and I prinned it to the curtain of the bed, in the room wherein I was instructed by Mrs Keckle to sleep. Little did either me or that worthy woman dream of the mischief that was then brewing and hatching, against the great care and occupation wherewith we had in a manner regenerated the periwig into its primitive style of perfectness.

But you must understand that Mrs Keckle had a black cat

that was not past the pranks of kittenhood, though in outwardly show a most douce and well-comported beast ; and what would ye think baudrons was doing all the time that the mistress and me were so eydent about the wig? She was sitting on a chair, watching every pluff that I gave, and meditating, with the device of an evil spirit, how to spoil all the bravery that I was so industriously endeavouring to restore into its proper pedigree and formalities. I have long had a notion that black cats are no overly canny, and the conduct of Mrs Keckle's was an evidential kithing to the effect, that there is nothing of uncharitableness in that notion of mine; howsomever, no to enlarge on such points of philosophical controversy, the wig being put in order, I carried it to the bed-room, and, as I was saying, prinned it to the bed-curtains, and then went down stairs again to the parlour to make exercise, and to taste Mrs Keckle's mutton ham, by way of a relish to a tumbler of toddy, having declined any sort of methodical supper.

Considering the melancholious necessity that had occasioned my coming to the Kilmartin Manse, I was beholden to enlarge a little after supper with Mrs Keckle, by which the tumbler of toddy was exhausted before I had made an end of my exhortation, which the mistress seeing, she said, that if I would make another cheerer she would partake in a glass with me. It's no my habit to go such lengths at any time, the more especially on a Saturday night; but she was so pressing that I could not but gratify her; so I made the second tumbler, and weel I wat it was baith nappy and good; for in brewing I had an e'e to pleasing Mrs Keckle, and knowing that the leddies like it strong and sweet, I wasna sparing either of the spirit bottle or the sugar bowl. But I trow both the widow and me had to rue the consequences that befell us in that night; for when I went up again intil the bed-room, I was what ye would call a thought off the nail, by the which my sleep wasna just what it should have been, and dreams and visions of all sorts came hovering about my pillow, and at times I felt, as it were, the bed whirling round.

In this condition, with a bit dover now and then, I lay till the hour of midnight, at the which season I had a strange dream—wherein I thought my wig was kindled by twa candles of a deadly

yellow light, and then I beheld, as it were, an imp of darkness dancing at my bed-side, whereat I turned myself round and covered my head with the clothes, just in an eerie mood, between sleeping and waking. I had not, however, lain long in that posture, when I felt, as I thought, a hand clammng softly over the bed-clothes like a temptation, and it was past the compass of my power to think what it could be. By and by, I heard a dreadful thud on the floor, and something moving in the darkness; so I raised my head in a courageous manner to see and question who was there. But judge what I suffered when I beheld, by the dim glimmer of the starlight of the window, that the curtains of the bed were awfully shaken, and every now and then what I thought a woman with a mutch keeking in upon me. The little gude was surely busy that night, for I thought the apparition was the widow, and that I saw Cluty himself, at every other keek she gave, looking at me o'er her shoulder with his fiery een. In short, the sight and vision grew to such a head upon me, that I started up, and cried with a loud voice, "O, Mistress Keckle, Mistress Keckle, what's brought you here?" The sound of my terrification gart the whole house dirl, and the widow herself, with her twa servan' lasses, with candles in their hands, came in their flannen coaties to see what was the matter, thinking I had gane by myself, or was taken with some sore dead-ill. But when the lights entered the room, I was cured of my passion of amazement, and huddling intil the bed aneath the clothes, I expounded to the women what had disturbed me, and what an apparition I had seen—not hinting, however, that I thought it was Mrs Keckle. While I was thus speaking, one of the maidens gied a shrill skirling laugh, crying, "Och hon, the poor wig!" and sure enough nothing could be more humiliating than the sight it was; for the black cat, instigated, as I think, by Diabolus himself to an endeavour to null it down, had with her claws combed out both the curls and the pouter; so that it was hinging as lank and feckless as a tap of lint, just as if neither the mistress nor me had laid a hand upon it. And thus it was brought to light and testimony, that what I had seen and heard was but the devil of a black cat louping and jumping to bring down my new wig for a playock

to herself, in the which most singular exploits she utterly ruined it; for upon an examine next day, the whole faculty of the curls was destroyed, and great detriment done to the substance thereof.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE Odontist, at the end of Mr Birkwhistle's story, applied himself to seduce from her taciturnity a matronly woman, that uttered herself in a sort of Englified Scotch, or, as the doctor said in a by-way, winking with a drollery that was itself an entertainment to me—"Her words are just a mixture of peas and sweeties."

"Madam," quo' the Odontist, "as ye seem to have had some experience of man, ye'll just gie us a bit tig and gae by, in the shape of some wee couthy tale; and, to help to oil the hinge of your tongue, hae, take a glass o' wine."

"Ye're very obligatory," said the mistress; "and I thank you for this great proof of your politesse and expedience. But 'deed, doctor, I have met with nothing of a jocosity to entertain the like of you, saving a sore fright that I got some years ago, the which, in all particulars, was one of the most comical misfortunes that ever happened to any single woman, far less to a desolate widow like me."

TRAVELLING BY NIGHT.

Ye should ken, doctor, and gentlemen and ladies, that I am, by reason of birth, parentage, and education, an Edinburgh woman. But, in course of time, it so fell out, that when I was married I found myself left a widow in the city of Bristol; upon the which yevent I took up a house in Clifton—nae doubt, doctor, ye have heard often enough tell o' Clifton—and living there, as I was saying, I took a wearying fit to see my kith and kin in

Scotland, and so set out in the coach, with the design and intent of travelling by night and by day to Edinburgh, straight through, without stopping. I'll never forget, to the day I die, what befell me in that journey, by a nocturnal reciprocity with a poor young man.

We took him in on the road, where he was waiting for the carriage, with an umbrella under his oter and a bundle in his hand. The sight of him was a sore thing, for his eyes were big and blue, his cheeks skin and bone, and he had a host that was just dreadful. It was death rapping with his knuckle at the chamber door of the poor creature's precious soul. But we travelled on, and I said to the young man that his friends were making a victim of him. He, however, had no fear, saying he was going home to try the benefit of his native air.

When we came, I think it was to the town of Lancaster, I steppit out to get a chop of dinner, leaving the lad in the coach; and when I had received a refreshment, and taken my seat again, I saw he was busy with his bundle, in the custody of which he had a bottle and a veal pie. "Heavens preserve us!" quo' I, "what poison is that ye have been murdering yourself with?" But he only laughed to see the terror I was in. For a' that, to think of a man with such a coughing host eating such a peppery conservatory as a pie, and tasting of the deadly indecorum of a brandy bottle, was a constipation of affliction that I cannot sufficiently express.

However, nothing happened for some time; but the coach hurled, he hosted, and the night it was growing dark; at last he gave, as ye would say, a skraik, and fell as dead as a door-nail, with the pie and the bottle on the seat before me.

At first, as ye may think, I was confounded; but presently I heard a lad that was ree with drink, singing on the top of the coach; so being my leeful lane with the dead body, I put my head out at the window, and bade the coachman to stop. It was by this time quite dark.

"I'll be very much obligated to you," quo' I to the driver, "if ye'll let the gentleman that's singing so blithely come in beside me; for the poor lad that was here has taken an ill turn."

The coachman very civilly consented to this, and the drunken

nightingale was allowed to come in ; but before he got the door opened, I took care to set the corpse upright, and to place it all in order, with the bundle in its hand on its knee.

"Friend," said I to the ree man, "ye'll be so good as to keep this poor lad in a steady posture, for he has had a low turn, and maybe it'll be some time before he recover."

"I'll do that," said he ; and accordingly he sat beside the dead man, and held him up, as away the coach went with us all three.

"I wish, ma'am," said the supporter, after having sat some time silent, "that the man be not already dead, for I do not think he breathes."

"Don't trouble him," quo' I, "he's but in a low way."

We had not gone far till he lifted the dead man's arm and let it fall ; and it fell like a lump of clay.

"By heaven, he's dead !" said my living companion in alarm ; "he does not breathe, and his hand is as powerless as a knuckle of veal."

"Cannot you let the man alone ?" said I ; "how would you like to be so fashed if ye had fainted yourself ? I tell you it's no decent to be meddling with either his feet or hands."

Upon my saying which words, the drunken fool, holding up the body with his left hand, lifted one of its legs and let it drop.

"Madam," said he in a mournful voice, "he does not breathe ; he has no power in his hands ; and his leg's a dead log. I'll bet ten to one, he's dead."

"Surely," quo' I, "no poor woman was ever so tormented as I am. What business have you either to bet or bargain on the subject ? Cannot ye in a peaceable manner just do as I bid you, and keep the poor man in a Christian posture ?"

But, for all that, we had not driven far till the inquisitive fellow put his hand into the bosom of the corpse.

"By jingo, madam," said he, "if this ben't a dead man, the last oyster I swallowed is living yet. He does not breathe ; his hand's powerless ; his leg can't move ; and his heart don't beat. The game's all up with him, depend upon't, or my name's not Jack Lowther."

"Well, I declare, Mr Lowther," quo' I, "I never met the like

of you. Who ever heard of a man dying in a stage-coach? I am surprised ye could think of mentioning such a thing to a leddy. It's enough to frighten me out of my judgment. For the love of peace, Mr Lowther, hold your tongue about death, and haud up the man till we get to Kendal."

"I may hold him up—that I don't refuse; but, ma'am," said Mr Lowther, "the poor fellow is already food for worms. Feel his bosom; put in your hand—do, pray. By jingo, he is as cold as a frog, and as dead as a leg of mutton. I have given him such a pinch, that, if he had a spark of life, it must have made him jump."

"Mr Lowther," said I with great sincerity, "ye're a most extraordinary perplexity, to nip the man in that way. It's enough to cause his death. I am surprised ye have so little regard to humanity."

So with some converse of the same sort, we at last reached the inn door at Kendal; and when the waiter came with a candle to see who would alight for supper, I said to him, "Let me quietly out, for there's a dead man in the coach beside me." The waiter uttered a cry of terrification, and let the candle fall in the dib; but in an instant twenty other lights came flaming, and a crowd gathered around us, while Mr Lowther jumped out of the carriage like a creature by himself, and was like to faint with the thought of having travelled in the company of a corpse. And to be surely it was not a very pleasant companion we had. However, it gave me a warning never to travel by night again; for I was needcessitated to bide till the coroner had made a questification of my testimony; and I got no sleep, neither that night nor for three after, with the thought of sitting in a coach with a dead body, holding a veal pie and a brandy bottle in its hands, which every one must allow was a concurrence of a very alarming kind to a single woman.

When the Englified Edinburgh lady had made an end of her story, the doctor gave me a nodge on the elbow, and said with a winking, to let me ken he was but in jocularly, "Now, Tammy, ye'll see how I'll squabash them;" and with that, he addressed himself aloud to the company of passengers assembled round us,

saying how he was diverted by the stories he had heard, but that he had one of his own to tell, more extraordinary than them all, with other preliminary observes of the same sort, to waylay the attention.

THE ODONTIST'S MONKEY

I had a monkey once—it was just like a French wean—a' mouth and een. It came from Senegal, or Gibraltar, or the Ape-hill of Africa—whilk o' the three, gude kens. But it wasna ane of the common clanjamphrey that ye see at fairs—it was a douce monkey, wi' nane o' that devilry and chatter of the show-man's tribe; it was as composed as a provost, and did all its orders and ends in a methodical manner. Lordsake, but it had amaist as muckle gumption as my friend Tammy here, and I took a pleasure in the education of the creature!—I have long had a conceit that the auld way of education is no conducted in a proper manner, and therefore I tried a new device o' my ain with puggy. Noo, attend to what I am telling—for if ye dinna follow the thread o' my discourse, ye'll loose the end o't altogether.

Ae morning I was sitting writing a bit sang for Blackwood—his magazine couldna go on without me—when I observed puggy watching me wi' the e'e of a philosopher or a professor—ye ken the ane's as wise as the other—I took a visie at the beast, and I said till't, “Puggy, come here,” and it was on the table like a flea. “Dost thou think, puggy,” quo' I, “thou could'st learn to write?”—I was just confounded to see the thing at the words take a pen and dip it into the ink-bottle, and then look up in my face and gie a nod, as much as to say—“I'll try, set me a copy.”

So I set the sensible beast a copy in strokes, and it then began after me. Its strokes were better than mine—I was dumfounded, and next tried it in the A, B, C—no Chinese copiator could do half so well.—“I'll make a something as good as a printing-press, or the lithography, o' thee, puggy,” said I, patting it on the head. The creature look'd up weel pleased wi' the compliment; and then I wrote in large text CAT, and pointing

to pussy, that was lying on the rug afore the fire, said—"CAT." Puggy gave a nod, and immediately wrote cat; and pointing to baudrons, gave another nod, and said "cat."

"Are ye no the de'il?" said I, starting back, and looking to see that it hadna a cloven foot. I then drew in my chair, and gave it another lesson, and for copy, set it HAND, repeating the word, and showing my own—all which puggy did in the same manner, with a humanity no to be described. In this way, on the first morning I taught it to read and write, and speak the name of every thing in the room, and about me.

The second lesson was more curious than the first. I tried to gie t abstract ideas. There's no a professor o' the metaphysical nonsense o' a' the colleges, can teach his whippersnapper students like me.

I laid a book on a chair, and going to my place at the table, I went back and brought the book to it, and laid it on the table, and then I wrote the word FETCH. Puggy was fash'd a wee at first; but by-and-by it suited the action to the word, as Will Shakespeare says, and I soon saw it understood me like another Solomon. Then I wrote ME, but without speaking it, mind that, and touched myself. Puggy likewise wrote ME, and, coming forward, touched me, and looking up in my face, showed that it understood that I was me.—BOOK it had learned the day before, as I was telling you; so that when I laid the volume back again on the chair, and said, "Puggy, fetch me the book," it jumpit away and brought it as cleverly as a fairy.

Here the doctor made a full stop, for every body was listening in credulous admiration, and then he rose from the table, and, flourishing his switch, twirled round like a tee-totum, and made all the echoes of the coast ring with his laughter, at having so quizzed the natives.

CHAPTER XIV.

THUS passed the first afternoon of my retour by the Mountaineer, and the next day being blasty and bleak, nobody was in a humour either to tell or to hear stories; but on the morning of the third, as we came in sight of the Bass, the sun came so brightly out of his bed ayont the sea, to run his race rejoicing, that we felt the strength of man renewed within us, and the doctor, being as blithe as a bumbee in a summer morning, immediately after breakfast began, like that busy creature humming from flower to flower, to gather tales and pleasant stories from all around him.

When we had arranged our stools after breakfast on the deck, and chosen the Odontist preses of the sitting, he looked around with his hawk's eye, and fixing on a young man of a demure and clerical look, said to him, "Friend, let's see what ye hae gotten in your pack; open, and show's your wares." With that the austere lad answered that he would relate a story suitable to the place and the objects around us.

THE COVENANTER

I am sorry, sir, (said he, with a grave voice,) that there are some among us who consider the reverend gentleman's story as a derogatory picture of the Scottish clergy. I think those who do so, have allowed their understandings to be seduced into a reverence for forms and ceremonies, totally inconsistent with that familiar and domestic piety which is characteristic of the presbyter, and enters into all he does and says. The new-fangled formalities that are corrupting the simplicity of the Presbyterian worship—the papistical ringing of "the sacring bell" before the minister enters the pulpit—and the heartless trills of those hireling and prelatie choirs, that have been substituted in some places for "the praises of the congregation,"—are abominations which our ancestors would have laughed down, or swept away with the besom of destruction, as they did

the trumpery of the monks and prelates. I say this the more seriously, because of late a spirit seems to have gone abroad, at war with that reverence which Scottish hearts were once taught to cherish for the martyrs of their national religion. But, sir, when those perishable temples which vanity purposes to raise to the learned and the valiant are crumbled into dust, yon monument, which the Divine Architect himself constructed, will stand sublime amidst the solitudes of the waters, a witness and a testimony to all true Scotchmen of the intrepid virtue of their pious forefathers.

The tale which I intend to tell you relates to the Bass Isle, towards which we are now steering; and it has been recalled to my remembrance by the sight of North Berwick Law, at the bottom of which, in the churchyard of the town, is the tomb of John Blackader, the martyr, a man whom power could not daunt, nor suffering subdue; nor the pains and infirmities of sickness impair the invincible firmness of his holy integrity. In this backsliding age, it is a proud thing for Scotland to have witnessed the late breaking forth of the good old spirit; for when the GREAT UNKNOWN, as some call him, put out his tale of Old Mortality, true Presbyterians conceived that he had laid an irreverent hand on the ark of our great national cause, the Covenant; and, animated by the spirit of ancient zeal, immediately began to repair the tombs of the martyrs in almost every place where they had fallen into decay. Mr Blackader's has been repaired; and it is with exultation I state, that, among the school-boys of my native town, a little subscription has restored two similar monuments, that were, till the publication of "The Tales of My Landlord."

"With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown."

The martyr of whom I shall now give you some account, was by birth a gentleman. His great-grandfather, Sir Robert Pont, by the mother's side, was minister of St Cuthbert's Church, and also a lord of session. In 1595, he was moderator of the General Assembly. This inheritance of religion and honour gave elevation to the character and sentiments of young Blackader, who, in 1653, was ordained to the ministry, and presented to

the parish of Troqueer, in Galloway. Here, for nine years, he proved himself an able and vigilant pastor, and was among the first who resisted the violation of the Presbyterian worship. Supported by other manly champions of the testimony, he bravely threatened, in the Synod of Dumfries, to depose, as enemies to the national religion, whoever among them should dare to comply with the new ceremonies, or to take that oath of supremacy which an unprincipled court was then attempting to force upon the people. For this he incurred the penalties proclaimed in the order for the persecution, issued at Glasgow in October 1662, and a party of Guards were sent from Dumfries to seize him. He, however, escaped; but his wife and young children were rudely treated by the soldiery, and driven from the manse, without knowing where to find shelter or protection, save only in the goodness of Providence.

The conduct of the people during these outrages was singularly exemplary. They often in bands met the clergymen, whom laxer notions of the Presbyterian forms induced to accept of livings so coercively made vacant, and implored them with tears not to profane the worship of God by entering where they were forbidden guests. And when they beheld their faithful pastors dragged away like felons by the blasphemous gangs of Claverhouse and Lauderdale, they cheered them with blessings as they passed, and prayed often on their knees for that retribution on the persecutor, that has since been showered down upon his line till not one of the race has been spared any longer to defile the face of the earth.

After the expulsion from his parish, Mr Blackader took up his abode in Craigdarroch, where, being without the bounds of his own presbytery, he was suffered for about three years to remain unmolested.

It was a practice among the ejected ministers to preach and baptize in the neighbourhood where chance had fixed their uncertain abode, and this was done, not in contempt of authority, but in commiseration of the necessities of the people, who turned with aversion from the prelatie plague that, like the frogs of Egypt, afflicted the land. Many of the intruders were, no doubt, weak persons, of a respectable moral character; but they were

mostly young men from the northern shires, raw, and without any stock of reading or gifts, who, having passed a year or two of philosophy at the college, came southward, greedily gaping after the vacant benefices. The commonalty assailed their logic with stubborn arguments, while the laxer of the gentry staggered their faith with strong drink. To serve as an excuse for not attending their sermons, the church bell was, in some places, deprived of its tongue. Its weekly admonition was commonly considered as the voice of the oppressor bragging of his power. Military force was let loose, and the sincere worship of God was proclaimed traitorous rebellion against the king.

At the instance of the Bishop of Galloway, information was lodged against Mr Blackader, as a person guilty of "leavening the people with disaffection, and alienating the hearts of the lieges from his majesty's government;" and by a proclamation of council, he, with others of his late co-presbyters, was accused of unlawfully convocating the subjects in fields and private houses every Sabbath, where they were in the custom of baptizing the children of disloyal persons.

Sir James Turner, who commanded the forces at that time in Dumfries-shire—a ferocious drunkard, and worthy compeer of "the bloody Claverhouse"—on receiving information against Blackader, sent a detachment to arrest him; but he had previously departed with his wife to Edinburgh. In searching the house, the soldiers behaved with a brutality grateful to the demon whom their superiors served. They compelled one of the children to hold the candle while they stabbed the beds in which they supposed his parents were concealed. Another, a mere infant, was so horrorstruck by their violence, that he ran naked into the darkness of the night, and was found afterwards at a great distance in a state of distraction.

From this period the martyr led a wandering and homeless life; his children were dispersed, and forced to implore shelter wherever charity was brave enough to hazard the penalties of the act against reset, and converse with the ejected ministers. But oppression only hardened the courageous spirit of the conscientious. Mr Blackader resolutely waged the holy war; and

the hill of Beath, in the parish of Dunfermline, was often his pulpit.

On one occasion when, together with other undaunted antagonists of misgovernment, the martyr was preaching there, a lieutenant of militia, stationed in the neighbourhood, came riding to the spot, and endeavoured, with threats and furious gestures, to disperse the Covenanters. It was customary for the men who attended those meetings to come armed. One of them having remonstrated in vain with the officer, took his horse coolly by the bridle, and, pulling out his pistol, told him if he did not desist from his turbulence he would blow out his brains, and held him in that state till the sermon was finished. But it is not for me in this hasty sketch to enter into all the particulars of the sufferings of those who have made yonder rock that hallowed monument of Scottish zeal and piety which it ought ever to be considered.

Some time after the incident at the hill of Beath, Mr Blackader was seized and sent a prisoner to the Bass, where the hardships he suffered soon destroyed his health. Some minds are so constituted and local, that the privations of confinement are scarcely felt as an evil; but to a man of such an animated temperament as this zealous martyr, the mere imagination of being fastened to a spot, and denied the exercise of his faculties and communion with his kind, was of itself more afflicting than the damp dungeon, or the loathsome meal, and the bitter water. It is indeed difficult to picture a more impressive spectacle of solitary misery, than that of a venerable old man sitting alone for hours on the bleak sea-beat rocks, like Prometheus in his chains, gnawed by grief for the woes and sorrows that were laying waste his native land, and the horror and poverty that pursued his own defenceless family.

After being detained some time on the Bass, his health became so infirm, that, upon a representation to the conclave of persecutors, he was allowed, on giving security, to be removed to Haddington, where he soon escaped from all the tyranny of this world, and in ascending to heaven, left the mantle of his zeal a retributive legacy with his family, making them instruments to

avenge the sufferings of their country, by essentially contributing to the expulsion of the heartless and licentious Stuarts. His eldest son, William, was employed as a confidential agent by some of the deposed clergy, in secret embassies to their exiled brethren in Holland, who were then engaged in promoting the Revolution, and on these dangerous expeditions he frequently went between the two countries. In one of them he was seized on his landing at Leith, and carried before the Duke of York, who was then in Scotland. His sister was among the crowd who followed him to the examination before his royal highness ; but she was not permitted to approach her brother near enough to speak to him. She observed him, however, looking at her with an expressive steadfastness, and holding up his hat as if to draw her attention particularly to it. Inspired with the idea that this was the mysterious symbol of some important secret, she immediately quitted the court and returned to Edinburgh, where, on searching his lodgings, she found a hat, with papers concealed in the lining, of such a nature that, had they been discovered, they might have proved fatal evidence against himself as well as others. She instantly, therefore, destroyed them, and by this well-timed resolution anticipated the fearful consequences ; for a party came to the house an hour after, to search for papers, and finding nothing suspicious, returned with such a favourable report to the duke that her brother was immediately liberated ; and when the Revolution afterwards took place, he was appointed, chiefly on account of the services he had performed in those secret missions, physician to King William.

CHAPTER XV.

HERE the austere young man paused in his story, and as we were now alongside of the Bass, he took off his hat with great solemnity, as is done at burials when the respected dead is laid in the grave ; and we were all so affected thereat, that we did

the same in like manner, and passed along in silence, nothing being heard but the sound of the paddles and the mournful cawing of the sea-birds, which spread far and wide over the waters, like the voices of antiquity that admonish the children of remote times to reverence the memory of all departed worthies. In short, such was the effect of the Covenanter's story, and his earnest way of telling it, that we were all for some time in a solemn mood; even the gay and gallant Odontist, forgetful of all his wonted jollity, walked slowly up and down the deck, whistling "The Flowers of the Forest" in a most melancholy manner.

During the different recitals here rehearsed, I happened to observe a young man, with a white face and a slender habit of body, that seemed to have the matter of thought within him; so, in order to bring some new diversion in among the company, I went and said to him that we would be all very happy if he would take upon him to entertain us with some story or adventure, to the which he consented in the most obliging manner. But what sort of diversion he caused, the courteous reader may well judge when he has perused what follows.

THE BURIED ALIVE.

Perhaps, (said he,) none of you have ever met with a more extraordinary adventure than what I have now to relate. It happened to myself—I do not therefore ask or expect you to believe it, nor can the feelings with which I was affected be imagined without experiencing the impression of the same awful circumstances.

I had been for some time ill of a low and lingering fever. My strength gradually wasted; but the sense of life seemed to become more and more acute as my corporeal powers became weaker. I could see by the looks of the doctor that he despaired of my recovery; and the soft and whispering sorrow of my friends, taught me that I had nothing to hope.

One day towards the evening, the crisis took place. I was seized with a strange and indescribable quivering—a rushing

sound was in my ears—I saw around my couch innumerable strange faces; they were bright and visionary, and without bodies. There was light and solemnity, and I tried to move, but could not. For a short time a terrible confusion overwhelmed me, and, when it passed off, all my recollection returned with the most perfect distinctness, but the power of motion had departed. I heard the sound of weeping at my pillow, and the voice of the nurse say, “He is dead.” I cannot describe what I felt at these words. I exerted my utmost power of volition to stir myself, but I could not move even an eyelid. After a short pause my friend drew near; and, sobbing and convulsed with grief, drew his hand over my face, and closed my eyes. The world was then darkened, but I could still hear, and feel, and suffer.

When my eyes were closed, I heard by the attendants that my friend had left the room, and I soon after found the undertakers were preparing to habit me in the garments of the grave. Their thoughtlessness was more awful than the grief of my friends. They laughed at one another as they turned me from side to side, and treated what they believed a corpse with the most appalling ribaldry.

When they had laid me out, these wretches retired, and the degrading formality of affected mourning commenced. For three days a number of friends called to see me. I heard them, in low accents, speak of what I was; and more than one touched me with his finger. On the third day some of them talked of the smell of corruption in the room.

The coffin was procured—I was lifted and laid in—My friend placed my head on what was deemed its last pillow, and I felt his tears drop on my face.

When all who had any peculiar interest in me, had for a short time looked at me in the coffin, I heard them retire; and the undertaker’s men placed the lid on the coffin, and screwed it down. There were two of them present—one had occasion to go away before the task was done. I heard the fellow who was left begin to whistle as he turned the screw-nails; but he checked himself, and completed the work in silence.

I was then left alone—every one shunned the room. I knew

however, that I was not yet buried; and though darkened and motionless, I had still hope, but this was not permitted long. The day of interment arrived—I felt the coffin lifted and borne away—I heard and felt it placed in the hearse. There was a crowd of people around; some of them spoke sorrowfully of me. The hearse began to move—I knew that it carried me to the grave. It halted, and the coffin was taken out—I felt myself carried on the shoulders of men, by the inequality of the motion—A pause ensued—I heard the cords of the coffin moved—I felt it swing as dependent by them—It was lowered and rested on the bottom of the grave—The cords were dropped upon the lid—I heard them fall—Dreadful was the effort I then made to exert the power of action, but my whole frame was immoveable.

Soon after, a few handfuls of earth were thrown upon the coffin—then there was another pause—after which the shovel was employed, and the sound of the rattling mould, as it covered me, was far more tremendous than thunder. But I could make no effort. The sound gradually became less and less, and by a surging reverberation in the coffin, I knew that the grave was filled up, and that the sexton was treading in the earth, slapping the grave with the flat of his spade. This too ceased, and then all was silent.

I had no means of knowing the lapse of time; and the silence continued. This is death, thought I, and I am doomed to remain in the earth till the resurrection. Presently the body will fall into corruption, and the epicurean worm, that is only satisfied with the flesh of man, will come to partake of the banquet that has been prepared for him with so much solicitude and care. In the contemplation of this hideous thought, I heard a low and undersound in the earth over me, and I fancied that the worms and the reptiles of death were coming—that the mole and the rat of the grave would soon be upon me. The sound continued to grow louder and nearer. Can it be possible, I thought, that my friends suspect they have buried me too soon? The hope was truly like light bursting through the gloom of death.

The sound ceased, and presently I felt the hands of some dreadful being working about my throat. They dragged me

out of the coffin by the head. I felt again the living air, but it was piercingly cold; and I was carried swiftly away—I thought to judgment, perhaps perdition.

When borne to some distance, I was then thrown down like a clod—it was not upon the ground. A moment after, I found myself on a carriage; and, by the interchange of two or three brief sentences, I discovered that I was in the hands of two of those robbers who live by plundering the grave, and selling the bodies of parents, and children, and friends. One of the men sung snatches and scraps of obscene songs, as the cart rattled over the pavement of the streets.

When it halted, I was lifted out, and I soon perceived, by the closeness of the air and the change of temperature, that I was carried into a room, and, being rudely stripped of my shroud, was placed naked on a table. By the conversation of the two fellows with the servant who admitted them, I learned that I was that night to be dissected.

My eyes were still shut—I saw nothing; but in a short time I heard, by the bustle in the room, that the students of anatomy were assembling. Some of them came round the table, and examined me minutely. They were pleased to find that so good a subject had been procured. The demonstrator himself at last came in.

Previous to beginning the dissection, he proposed to try on me some galvanic experiment—and an apparatus was arranged for that purpose. The first shock vibrated through all my nerves; they rung and jangled like the strings of a harp. The students expressed their admiration at the convulsive effect. The second shock threw my eyes open, and the first person I saw was the doctor who had attended me. But still I was as dead; I could, however, discover among the students the faces of many with whom I was familiar; and when my eyes were opened, I heard my name pronounced by several of the students, with an accent of awe and compassion; and a wish that it had been some other subject.

When they had satisfied themselves with the galvanic phenomena, the demonstrator took the knife, and pierced me on the bosom with the point. I felt a dreadful crackling, as it were,

throughout my whole frame—a convulsive shuddering instantly followed, and a shriek of horror rose from all present. The ice of death was broken up—my trance ended. The utmost exertions were made to restore me, and in the course of an hour I was in the full possession of all my faculties.

* * * * *

While the pale lad was thus speaking, we were all so interested in what he said, that we never noticed how, in the mean time, the steam-boat had brought us to the pier of Leith, where we disembarked, and I, landing with the Odontist, proceeded with him in one of the Leith stages to his house in St Andrew Street, in the New Town, where I stayed with him the two days I stopped in the Gude Town, being treated in the most hospitable manner for any man to be.

CHAPTER XVI.

IT was well known that the Edinburgh folk are in the main a well-informed, civilized sort of people, though a thought gi'en, as we think in the West, to making mair rouse about themselves than there is any needcessity for; but as I met with the height of discretion at their hands, it would never do for me to say of them what, maybe, an I were like some among themselves, I could say. Luckily, however, for them, I'm no naturally of a very critical turn, nor can I say that I hae ony particular fondness for critics at all, especially since I began to put out my writings; for it is well known that they are creatures of no mercy, but, just like wasps and clegs, delight and make their living by tormenting poor authors, who are the useful cattle and milch cows of literature.

But for all this I would not have it thought that I think the community of letters, more than any other, can do without a police—far be such a principle of liberty and equality from me. I would, however, like if the gangs belonging to it were treated

as other dog-pelters, constables, and town-officers, commonly are, with a proper regard to decorum, and the subordination that is fitting to their calling, and no just placed on a footing with the regular burgesses. And in here giving a wipie in the by-going to the criticising policemen of Edinburgh, I should note a very remarkable thing that I heard anent them, how they have of late been cut to the quick, because a wheen bardy laddies stand Ehing! at them as they gang alang Prince's Street, and now and then gie them a plooky on the cheek with a pip or a cherry-stane, in the same good-will as the grammar-school callans of former times, as I have heard said, were wont, on certain privileged and saturnalian occasions, to pelt and pester the auld divor bodies of the town-guard, just for fun.

No doubt, however, but there was some magnifying of their grief and consternation in what I was told; for really it's no to be credited that Mr Jamphrey, who is their chief captain and leader, can be just so heart-broken about it as some would fain fancy—for he's no without a share of common sense, though aiblins a wee conceity of himsel'; and therefore I would not have the world to believe, that when he sees any of the aforesaid misleart laddies, he turns at them like a wud terrier; for the truth of the story is, that Mr Jamphrey comports himself with the greatest composure under his sufferings, and walks past them as proud as a pepper-box, never jooking, nor letting wot that he sees them. But, indeed, all that he ever got from them has been nothing to the joke that was played off on him by a light-hearted lassie, the whilk made such good fun, that young and auld, gentle and semple, are just like to dee and split their sides when they think of him and her. But to descend out of the mists of metaphysical language—

It seems that Mr Jamphrey has a great notion of his own discernment; and being in company with a clever young lady, that has a knack at putting on droll Scotch characters, he said to her that it wasna in her power to cast the glammer ower him; but the man who is so impudent as to defy the wiles of woman-kind, will rue his bragging till the day of his death and I trow this truth fand honest Mr Jamphrey.

MRS OGLE OF BALBOGLE.

"I should like above all things," they say Mr Jamphrey said. "to see a specimen of her performance; but I think her natural manner is so peculiar that she could not disguise herself from me." To this his friend replied, that he shouldna be sae cocksure, for that maybe she would delude him in a way past comprehension, and even gar him notice the most remarkable thing about her, without his ever jealousying the deception. Several months having passed over without any event coming to pass between Mr Jamphrey and her, the foregoing conversation was utterly forgotten and obliterated from his mind; but the lady, it would seem, had a better memory; for one day, when he expected the greater number of the same party to dine with him, when he had met with her, and while, after coming from the Parliament-house, he was dressing for dinner, two ladies were announced, desiring to seem him on some very urgent business. They were shown into the library, where he presently joined them, wondering what they could want at such an unseasonable hour.

The eldest of the two was a large matronly kintra-like wife, with tortoise-shell spectacles, dressed in an auld-fashioned style. She rustled in stiff drab-coloured lustrings; wore a hard muslin apron, covered with large tamboured flowers. On her hands she had white linen gloves, and on her head a huge black silk bonnet, gausy and full, and shaped something like the tuft of a tappit-hen.—Her companion had the air of a simple lassie, bashful and blushing.

"Ye'll no ken me, Mr Jamphler, I'se warrant," said the matron; "but aiblins ye maun hae heard o' me. I'm Mrs Ogle o' Balbogle, and I hae come intil Edinburgh, and anes errant, to take the benefit o' your counsel; for ye maun ken, Mr Jamphler, that I hae heard ye're a wonderful clever bodie baith at book lair, and a' other parts and particularities o' knowledge. In trouth, if a' tales be true, Mr Jamphler, they say the like o' you hasna been seen in our day, nor in our fathers' afore us, and that ye can gie an advice in a manner past the compass o man's power. In short, Mr Jamphler, it's just a curiosity to

hear what's said o' your ability in the law; and I thought I would never be properly righted unless I could get the help o' your hand. For mine's a kittle case, Mr Jamphler, and it's no a man o' a sma' capacity than can tak it up; howsomever, I would fain hope it's no past your comprehension, Mr Jamphler. Na, Mr Jamphler, ye mauna fash at me, for ye ken it's a business o' great straits and difficulties. I am, as I was saying, Mrs Ogle o' Balbogle, the relic o' auld Balbogle. O, he was an excellent character! and if he had been to the fore, I wouldna hae needed to trouble you, Mr Jamphler, wi' ony complaint.—But he's win awa out o' this sinfu' world, and I'm a poor lanely widow; howsomever, Mr Jamphler, they tell me there's no the like o' you for making the widow's heart glad."

Mr Jamphrey was by this time become rather impatient—the dinner-hour was drawing near—and, momentarily expecting his guests, he said, "Madam, I am at this time particularly engaged, and it would be as well for you to see your agent."

"My agent!" exclaimed Mrs Ogle of Balbogle. "Ye're my agent; I'll hae nae ither but you; I hae come here for nae ither purpose than to confer wi' you anent my affair"—

"Well, but what is it—what is it?" interrupted the counselor, a little quickly.

"Mr Jamphler, sit down; sit your ways down beside me," cried Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, "and hear my case. Ye needna be feart, Mr Jamphler, o' ony scaith frae me. I wadna meddle wi' the like o' you; and that's my own dochter, she's come wi' me for insight. Look up, Meg; a'm sure ye hae nae need to hang down your head like a tawpy. Mr Jamphler, she's no an ill-far't lassie, ye see, and she'll hae something mair than rosy cheeks for her tocher; and, Mr Jamphler, she's come o' gentle blood; we're nane o' your muslin manufactures; na, na, Mr Jamphler. I'm the Laird o' Barwullopston's only dochter mysel', and my father left me a bit land—I'm sure I needna ca't a bit, for it's a braw blaud. But to make a lang tale short, I had on the burn-side—ye'll aiblins, Mr Jamphler, ken the Crokit burn?"

"I think, madam," said Mr Jamphrey, "it would be as well to have your case stated in a memorial."

"Memorial, Mr Jamphler! Na, na, Mr Jamphler; nae memorials for me. Ye're to be my memorial and testimony, and a' that I require."

"I beg, then, madam, that you will call some other time, for at present I am very particularly engaged," interrupted the counsellor.

"Mr Jamphler, ye maun thole wi' me, for what I want your ability in is a matter o' desperation."

"Upon my word, madam, it is impossible for me to attend to you any longer at this time," exclaimed Mr Jamphrey.

"Noo, Mr Jamphler, really that's no like you; for Thomas Ellwand, the tailor in the Canongate, whar I stay—he taks in a' the books ye put out, and brags ye're o' a capacity to rule a kingdom—what will he say, when he hears ye wouldna spare half an hour frae your tea to pleasure a helpless widow? for I see by my watch it's near five o'clock, and so I suppose ye're hyte for ye're drap o' het water. Oh, Mr Jamphler! I hope ye hae mair concern for the like o' me, and that ye'll no falsify your repute for discernment in the judgment of Thomas Ellwand. He says that nobody can draw a strae afore your nose unkent. Aiblins, Mr Jamphler, ye're acquaint wi' Thomas: he's a desperate auld-farrant creature; he wasna pleased with the government here, so he took an o'ersea jaunt to America."

"Madam," said Mr Jamphrey, "pray what is the business on which you want to consult me?"

"Business! Mr Jamphler, it's a calamity—it's a calamity, Mr Jamphler!" exclaimed Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, spreading the hands of astonishment. But I forgot mysel'; now I see what for ye had been so impatient; I forgot to gie you a fee. There it is, Mr Jamphler, a gowden guinea, full weight."

"But what are your circumstances?"

"Circumstances! Mr Jamphler. I'm in a bien circumstance; for, as I was telling you, Mr Jamphler, I'm the relic o' auld Balbogle. Lang will it be, Mr Jamphler, before I get sic anither gudeman—but it was the Lord's will to tak him to himsel' wi' a fit o' the gout, three year past on the night of Mononday come eight days. Eh, Mr Jamphler, but his was a pleasant end! Weel it will be for you and me, Mr Jamphler, if we can

slip awa into the arms of our Maker like him. He was sarely crount, Mr Jamphler, before he died; and his death was a gentle dispensation, for he had lang been a heavy handfu'; but at last he gaed out o' this life like the snuff o' a candle. Howsomever, Mr Jamphler, being, as I was saying, left a widow—it's a sair thing, Mr Jamphler, to be a widow—I had a' to do; and my father having left me, among other things o' my bairn's part of gear—for the Barwullupton gaed, as ye ken, to my auld brother the laird, that married Miss Jenny Ochiltree o' the Mains; a very creditable connexion, Mr Jamphler, and a genteel woman—she can play on the spinnet, Mr Jamphler. But no to fash you wi' our family divisions, amang other things, there was on my bit grund a kill and a mill, situate on the Crokit burn, and I lent the kill to a neighbour to dry some aits—and, Mr Jamphler, oh what a sight it was to me—the kill took low, and the mill likewise took wi't, and baith gied just, as ye would say, a crackle, and nothing was left but the bare wa's and the stead-ing. Noo, Mr Jamphler, wha's to answer for the damage? Howsumever, Mr Jamphler, as I can see that it's no an aff-hand case, I'll bid you-gude day, and ye'll consider o't the morn, when I'll come to you afore the lords in the Parliament House."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr Jamphrey, while Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, rising and going towards the window, cried, "Oh, Mr Jamphler! the coach that brought us here—I wouldna come but in a coach to Mr Jamphler—But it's gone—Oh, Mr Jamphler! as I'm a wee o' a lamiter wi' the rheumatics, will ye hae the kindness just to rin out for a coach to me? I'll be very muckle obliged to you, Mr Jamphler; it's but a step yonder to whar the coaches are biding on the outlook."

Mr Jamphrey rang the bell, and ordered his servant to fetch instantly a coach.

"But, Mr Jamphler," resumed Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, "I hae another favour to ask: ye maun ken I'm sometimes tormented wi' that devilry they call the toothache; are ye acquaint wi' ony doctor that can do me good?"

Mr Jamphrey immediately mentioned my friend, the Odontist.—"Eh!" said Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, "the famous Doctor Scott! But whar does he bide, Mr Jamphler!" The urbane

counsellor mentioned his address—No. 10, St Andrew Street. “Ah! but, Mr Jamphler, ye maun write it down—for I hae but a slack memory.” Mr Jamphler, did so immediately; but the lady on looking at the paper, said, “Na, na, Mr Jamphler, that winna do—I canna read Greek—ye maun pit it in broad Scotch—I’m nane of your novel leddies, but Mrs Ogle o’ Balbogle.” Mr Jamphrey was in consequence obligated to write the address more legibly, and the coach coming to the door, the lady and her daughter withdrew.

Mr Jamphrey then joined the company in the drawing-room, and soon after the young lady, in *propria persona*, as they say, with the Odontist’s address in her hand, was announced as Mrs Ogle of Balbogle, and her fine teeth were recognised as her most remarkable feature.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALTHOUGH, during my sojourn in Edinburgh, I was as well entertained as any stranger could be, yet I began to languish for my own shop, and the calm back chamber, wherein I was wont to take my nightly composure with Mrs M’Lecket, for she is a most kindly woman, and spares no pains to make me comfortable; which is the reason that I have been so long lodged with her, and likely to continue her lodger. Accordingly, having, as I may say, a surfeit of the civilities of Edinburgh, which is to a certainty a most extraordinary place, as every body knows who has read concerning the same, or heard the inhabitants thereof discoursing about its beautiful prospects, and its other kinds of beautitudes and superiorities, physical and metaphysical, I came to a resolution of mind to return to the Saltmarket without delay; to the which end and effect I wrote two lines to Mrs M’Lecket in the forenoon, and tied it to a sheet of brown paper, carefully folded into the shape of a parcel, the post for that day being departed, and gave the same to the guard of one

of the coaches, that he might deliver it himself, with his own hands, to Mr Sweeties for Mrs M'Lecket; Mr Sweeties being in the practice, in the straits and difficulties of speculation, of overtaking the post, as a body may say, by the device of brown paper parcels, and, consequently, the guards are all well acquaint with him.

In the letter I told Mrs M'Lecket that she might have my bed well aired; for it was a moral intent with me to be with her, God willing, by the Wellington on the following night. It was not needful of me to give her any more than this gentle hint, in order to stir her up into an eydent spirit, whereby all my N's and my O's might receive due consideration.

Having performed this preliminary, I set myself to business, after I got my breakfast, on the day I was to return; and packing my trunk, which is a sore labour, as all travellers well know, it gave me a pain in my back that was not gone at the end of three weeks and five days, insomuch, that I thought it a confirmed rheumatic. Indeed, the doctor, who ought, by his education, to have known better, was of the same opinion, adding with a suspicion, that it might have something of a gouty nature in it. However, in time it wore away; but, for the occasion, it was not an agreeable companion. Nevertheless, I got myself in readiness for the Wellington, and embarked in the coach of that name, at M'Kay's hotel, the Odontist and Mr Christopher North himself, seeing me to the door with all the elegance and urbanity of their disposition and character.

In the coach, to my great pleasure and solace, who should I find seated but my old acquaintance, Mr Kilmahue, the Dumbarton writer, who is so well skilled in all the devices of the law that he is known by the name of Daniel. As he is by parentage a Glasgow man, and owner of a land of houses in the High Street, aboon the college, we soon fell into an edifying conversation about what had happened in the city during the long interval of my absence.

Among other things, he told me that he had been in at Edinburgh, taking the opinion of counsel anent the sale of the freehold vote on Mrs Muir's mortification to the parish of Cardross; "the which," said he, "is a tale worthy of remembrance in all ages."

THE BEEF BARREL; OR THE MORTIFICATION TO THE PARISH OF CARDROSS.

About a hundred years ago, there was a poor widow woman who lived at the burn of Drumfork; and she had an only daughter, who was baptized by the Christian name of Jenny. Of this lassie, the mother, having no other object to be kind to, was naturally very fond, and she loved her the more tenderly on account of the scant they were obligated to dree together—poverty, like the winter's cold, making them cower into ane-another the more kindly.

When Jenny was grown into a capacity to go out to service, she was fee'd into the Laird of Keppoch's, where, finding herself in a warmer beild than at home, she was wae for the condition in which she had left her mother, and could never take a meal of meat without a sorrowful reflection that her mother at the time was ill off for a morsel. This pitiable humour grew to such a head in the poor lassie, that, although she had been brought up wi' a strict reverence for the fear of God, it got the better of her honest principle; and one day, when her mother had come up from Drumfork to the Keppoch to see her, as she was going home in the evening, Jenny, having an opportunity, put a hand in the beef barrel, and stole, as she thought, a bit for a salt collop, which she hastily gave to her mother, thinking it would ne'er be missed.

It happened, however, that it was the tongue of the meat, and the only tongue in the barrel; so that some time after, when the lady wanted it one night, before a company, to lay a-steep, it was not forthcoming; and, like all careful mistresses, she no doubt wondered with severity what could have become o't. Jenny's conscience smote her, and dreading detection, she ran out of the house and fled towards Dumbarton in desperation, pursued by the bogle of her guilt, till she came to a burn then raging with a speat. At first she would have cast herself into the torrent, but she thought a heavenly light flashed in her face, and startled her back, and for a time she stood on the brink, ae minute listening, and the next ready to leap into the roaring

waters, till a sough as it were of somebody coming, worked her into despair, and she plunged forward to escape from the hands of men; but it would have been into the arms of the devil, had not the branch of a bramble bush caught her by the jupe, and plucked her, with the power of providence, like a brand from the burning.

In extricating herself from the bramble, Jenny became a little composed, and sat down on a stone, and wept and prayed, until she had come to a resolution to wade the burn, and seek her fortune in Glasgow; but when she tried the ford, the water was ower deep and rapid, and she was constrained to sit till the speat had subsided, which was not till the day had dawned.

While she was sitting in this disconsolate condition, wrung in the spirit with the disgrace she had brought upon herself and her parent, she pledged a vow, in the trust of Heaven, to ettle and strive if maybe she could gather as muckle as would defray the cost of bigging a brig over that burn. The frame of mind, and the faith in which she made this resolution, brought comfort with it, and she rose from the stone, and kilting her coats, waded the burn and took the road to Dumbarton, sorrowful, but not dejected—with the wide world before, and Providence her guide.

At Dumbarton she had an old auntie, with whom she hid herself the next day; for although her experience of the good-natured family of Keppoch might have told her she had little to fear from them, yet the sense of guilt overpowered her; and she found that Dumbarton was ower near the seat of her shame. She therefore proceeded to Glasgow, where, by the mediation of another friend, she got into the service of one of the bailies, and conducted herself among the weans so well, that she was recommended by her mistress to a lady who was going with her husband to London, a great undertaking at that time, and for which travellers made provisioning as for a voyage to the East Indies.

In London, Jenny, who was a weel-far't lassie, had soon as many wooers as Tibby Fowler; and among others one Mr Muir, a Scotchman of substance, and well to do in the world, and whom, after an expedient courtship, she married. He, however, did not live long,

and she soon became a widow with a decent jointure, by the which, though she remembered her vow, she considered herself obligated to maintain such an appearance as befitted the condition of her gudeman's wife; nevertheless, she spent nothing that could be hained, and when she died, it was found by her will that she had left a legacy to build a bridge over the burn, the remainder to be laid out for the behoof of the poor of her native parish. The bridge still stands, a monument of penitence and piety; and the land in which the remainder of the legacy was invested for the benefit of the poor, is now a valuable farm, the freehold of which the trustees, as it does not entitle them to a vote in the county elections, have some intention of selling, and of adding the interest of the purchase-money to increase the distributable amount of the income arising from Mrs Muir's mortification.

In this sort of pleasant communing, we were carried at a clever rate straight on to Glasgow, without meeting with any accident; and the coach, as I had given the guard a hint to do, stopped at the Cross, and let me out, where I was met by Mr Sweeties and other neighbours, who were all most extraordinar glad to see me; and James M'Glasham, the porter, having gotten my portmanty trunk on his shoulder, we walked down the Saltmarket to Mrs M'Lecket's, where, as I had a guess, I found the tea-things already set out in the most comfortable manner; and, by way of a welcome home, she had both marmalade and carvey in two saucers on her wee server, just as when she has her company to tea and supper at Yule; so that nothing could be more cordial than my reception; and Mr Sweeties, when he had shut his shop, coming in to hear the novels of the coronation, we spent a most jocose night, and betimes I retired to my bed-room, and was thankful for being returned in safety among my friends, after seeing such uncocs, and undergoing such very uncommon adventures.

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THE OMEN.

THE OMEN.

EPOCH I.

CHAPTER I.

* * * * EVEN my childhood was joyless, and a mystery overshadows all my earliest recollections. Sometimes, on the revisitations of the past, strange and obscure apparitional resemblances leave me in doubt whether they are indeed the memory of things which have been, or but of the stuff that dreams are made of.

The vision of a splendid mansion and many servants, makes me feel that I am, as it were, still but a child, playing with an orange on the carpet of a gorgeous room. A wild cry and a dreadful sound frighten me again; and, as I am snatched up and borne away, I see a gentleman lying bleeding on the steps of a spacious staircase, and a beautiful lady distractedly wringing her hands.

While yet struggling in the strangling grasps of that fearful nightmare, a change comes upon the spirit of my dream, and a rapid procession of houses and trees, and many a green and goodly object, passes the window of a carriage in which I am seated beside an unknown female, who sheds tears, and often caresses me.

We arrive at the curious portal of a turreted manorial edifice: I feel myself lifted from beside my companion, and fondly pressed to the bosom of a venerable matron, who is weeping in the dusky twilight of an ancient chamber, adorned with the portraits of warriors. A breach in my remembrance ensues;

and then the same sad lady is seen reclining on a bed, feeble, pale, and wasted, while sorrowful damsels are whispering and walking softly around. * * * *

She laid her withered hand upon my head, as I stood at her pillow. It felt like fire ; and, shrinking from the touch, I pushed it away, but with awe and reverence ; for she was blessing me in silence, with such kind and gentle eyes ! My tears still flow afresh whenever I think of those mild and mournful eyes, and of that withered and burning hand.

I never beheld that sad lady again ; but some time after the female who brought me in the carriage, led me by the hand into the room where I had seen her dying. It was then all changed ; and on the bed lay the covered form of a mysterious thing, the sight of which filled my infantine spirit with solemnity and dread. The poor girl, as she looked on it, began to weep bitterly ; I, too, also wept, but I knew not wherefore ; and I clung to her, overwhelmed with the phantasma of an unknown fear.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER the funeral of my grandmother, I was conveyed, by the same affectionate girl, in another carriage, to a lone house in a distant part of the country, where she consigned me to the care of an aged gentlewoman, of a serene and benign countenance.

The house stood on a bleak rising ground, overlooking a little bay, along the western skirts of which a few fishermen's huts formed a scattered hamlet. The eastern side was a rugged promontory, and tall cliffs and huge rocks beetled and frowned upon the restless ocean, that for ever chafed and murmured on the sandy margin at their feet.

When I had been some three or four days in that unvisited and solitary house, the venerable lady took me by the hand, and led me to walk on the smooth beach below the cliffs.

It was in the cool of a calm summer evening. The waves, as

they slowly rippled on the sand, churmed, as it were, a lullaby; the air was hushed with the holy stillness of the Sabbath; and the sea-birds, as they flew between me and the dark precipices, shone like silvery stars. A stately ship lay becalmed in the offing. The fishermen, who had been on board, were returning towards the shore; and the glancing of their oars appeared to the simplicity of my young imagination as if they were wantonly breaking the beautiful glassiness of the peaceful ocean.

A gentleman, who was sitting on a rock, started up, as we came unexpectedly upon him, and hastily retired. Something in his appearance arrested my attention; and I followed him with my eyes till he disappeared behind another jutting fragment of the precipice.

He had lately become the inhabitant of a little cottage, which stood in a niche of the cliffs. No one could tell whence he had come: all that was known concerning him was in the ravelled circumstances of an uncredited tale told by a poacher, who, being abroad in the night, on his unlawful vocation, saw a black boat passing athwart the disk of the moon, (then just emerging from the sea,) and making towards a vessel under sail. A solitary man was at the same time seen coming from the beach—one who had doubtless been landed from that vessel. Next morning, about break of day, the gentleman whom we had disturbed, applied at the cottage for some refreshment, and finding in the only inmate the needy widow of a fisherman, he persuaded her to take him for a guest, and with her he had continued to lead a companionless life.

The fishermen, sometimes moved by curiosity, threw themselves in his way, and asked him needless questions, with the hope of thereby establishing some acquaintanceship; but, although he answered them with mildness and courtesy, it was yet in so reserved a manner, that they at last entirely abstained from attempting to disturb the thoughtfulness of his melancholy.

CHAPTER III.

SEVERAL years elapsed before I again fell in with Mr Oakdale. I was then no longer an attended child, but a careless boy, allowed to range alone in the freedom of the hills and shores. It was during the summer of the year in which I was first sent to school, perhaps it was later in the season; for a vague assemblage of autumnal circumstances, yellow fields, and ripened berries, are mingled with the remembrance.

I was returning homeward along the brow of the cliffs which overhung his cottage; a sunny breeze was blowing from the sea; and a slight haziness in the air rather whitened than obscured the azure of the heavens. The waves were breaking on the shore, but neither hoarsely nor heavily; and the hissing of the grass and the rustling of the leaves, had more of life than of sadness in their sounds.

Immediately above the cottage was a path which meandered down among the rocks towards the hamlet; and as it shortened my distance from home I turned into it, and had descended about fifty yards, when I discovered him sitting on a rock with his chin resting on his hand. I knew him again at the first glance, so vividly had his image been impressed upon my young remembrance; and I felt as if I had known him in a previous state of existence, which had long, long ceased to be.

I looked at him for a moment, and then softly turned to retrace my steps; but he heard me, and raising himself from the ruminating posture in which he was sitting, he beckoned to me, and invited me with such encouraging accents to come to him, that in the ready confidence of boyhood I soon obeyed the summons.

At first he spoke playfully, as the gentle-hearted ever address themselves to children; but all at once he gazed at me with a wild and startled eye, and brushing up the curls from my forehead with his hand, perused my features with an alarming earnestness, and suddenly burst into tears.

When this paroxysm of incomprehensible sorrow had subsided, he tried to regain my confidence by those familiar civilities

which so soon allay the fears, and appease the anxieties of the young heart. Still there was a cast of grief and passion in his countenance, and ever and anon he fell into momentary fits of abstraction, during which, his tears, though with less violence, flowed again.

He enquired my name, but it was one of which he had never heard; and he questioned me about many things, but I was ignorant of them all. More than once he regarded me with a look so fierce and suspicious, that it made me quake, and I was fain to flee from him, but he held me firmly by the wrist. Nevertheless, in the midst of all that wayward and fantastical treatment, there was much gentleness; and I enjoyed on my heart the occasional breathings of a spirit framed of the kindest elements, and rich in the softest affections of pity, and charity, and love.

CHAPTER IV.

I REMAINED with him a long time. It was not indeed until the lighthouse and the evening star were mingling their beams on the glittering waters, that I thought of returning home.

He walked with me to the gate where Mrs Ormond was standing, alarmed at my absence, and anxiously looking for the servants whom she had sent out in quest of me.

The old lady, on seeing us, came eagerly forward, and, while affectionately embracing me, began to chide at my having stayed abroad to so late an hour. I had then hold of Mr Oakdale by the finger, and felt him start at the first sound of her voice: in the same moment he snatched his hand away, and hastily withdrew.

Surprised by his abruptness, Mrs Ormond raised herself from the posture into which she had stooped to caress me, and enquired with emotion who the stranger was. Before I had time to answer, he returned with a wild and strange haste, and seiz-

ing her by the hand endeavoured to remove her to a distance from me.

She demanded to know why he treated her so rudely. He said something in an emphatic whisper which I did not overhear, but it stunned her for an instant; and when she recovered, instead of making him any reply, she led me away, and without speaking closed the gate.

As we ascended the steps of the hall-door, I looked back and saw Mr Oakdale standing on the spot where we had left him. Mrs Ormond also looked back, and said with an accent which the echoes of memory have never ceased to repeat, "miserable, miserable man!" She then hurried me before her into the parlour, and sunk down upon a sofa, overwhelmed with agitation and grief.

The servants having returned, she enquired if the gentleman who brought me home was still at the gate, but none of them had seen him.

Being by this time somewhat composed, she began to question me again concerning him.

Though I told her all I knew, and that he was the same person whom we had seen so long before sitting forlornly on the rock, still my information appeared to afford no satisfaction, but only to call forth her wonder that he should have been so long so near us, and all the time so perfectly unknown; by which, young as I then was, and incapable of penetrating the mystery with which I was surrounded, I yet, nevertheless, could discern that I was doomed to experience some ill-omened sympathy with the disastrous fate and fortunes of that unhappy, solitary man.

CHAPTER V.

SOME feel that their consciousness of life is in their recollections, others enjoy it in their anticipations. I am of those whose sense of being is derived from the past.

Were the ever forward-going mind a thing to be spoken of as having form and lineament, I should say, that the eyes of mine were in the back of the brain. Of what may be it never reasons, but only doats, with the constancy of fascination, on pictures in the gallery of memory, which it would be happiness to know were but lunacies of the imagination, conceived in some eclipse, and coloured with the unblessed shadowings of the full moon. But wherefore speak of what I am? My task is to describe things seen, felt, and known: by these it shall be discovered what I was.

Next morning one of the servants learned from some of the fishermen, that the stranger, as Mr Oakdale was called among them, had left the widow's cottage, and was gone no one knew whither; but he had presented her with money enough to make her rich for all the remainder of her life.

I was present when these tidings were told to Mrs Ormond, and they did not allay the anxiety with which she was visibly affected from the event of the preceding evening. For some time she remained silent and thoughtful. I was busy with my toys; but I recollect, as it were a thing of present occurrence, that I now and then stole a glance at her countenance, while I thought of the kind and wayward gentleman of the rock.

She rose, and, opening her writing-desk, began a letter.—I observed, as she wrote, that she often sighed, and sometimes wiped her eyes. When it was finished a servant was dispatched on horseback with it, and returned with a post-chaise from Bevington. In the mean time there was a great bustle in the house, by the maids passing to and fro with articles of dress in their hands: the clothes I wore were changed for my holyday suit.

Mrs Ormond lifted me into the chaise, and placed herself by my side.—I was delighted with the prospect of a jaunt; and when the carriage began to move, and I beheld the objects without, seemingly passing by, it reminded me of my first journey, and brought all the impressive incidents of that eventful day again distinctly before me.

I spoke of them to Mrs Ormond as of things I had seen in a dream: at first, she gave little heed to my young prattling, for

her attention was engrossed with her own thoughts; but as from time to time some new circumstance was recalled, she gradually listened to me with more and more curiosity, till at last I perceived she was touched with amazement and alarm. Once or twice, she strangely, as it then seemed to me, enquired, if the gentleman of the rock had not described the things of which I was speaking; and she tried to persuade me that I had indeed dreamt them. But her endeavours produced an opposite effect; for they led me to trace so many incidents back from the time in which we were then together, that the illusion melted entirely away, till, mere child as I was, I could not but believe, that what I had at first described as a dream, was the memorial aliment on which my spirit had been long and secretly nourished. It is true, I could not divest them of the vague and visionary character which the recollections of childhood ever possess; but that early controversy gave them the distinctness of a renewed impression, and blended them with feelings which, even at the tender age of little more than six years, taught me to know, that I had sustained some great misfortune, and was perhaps the heir of guilt and contrition.

CHAPTER VI.

WHY are we so averse to confess to one another how much we in secret acknowledge to ourselves, that we believe the mind to be endowed with other faculties of perception than those of the corporeal senses? We deride with worldly laughter the fine enthusiasm of the conscious spirit that gives heed and credence to the metaphorical intimations of prophetic reverie, and we condemn as superstition, the faith which consults the omens and oracles of dreams; and yet, who is it that has not in the inscrutable abysses of his own bosom an awful worshipper, bowing the head and covering the countenance, as the dark harbingers of destiny, like the mute and slow precursors of the hearse marshal the advent of a coming woe?

It may be that the soul never sleeps, and what we call dreams, are but the endeavours which it makes, during the trance of the senses, to reason by the ideas of things associated with the forms and qualities of those whereof it then thinks. Are not indeed the visions of our impressive dreams often but the metaphors with which the eloquence of the poet would invest the cares and anxieties of our waking circumstances and rational fears? But still the spirit sometimes receives marvellous warnings; and have we not experienced an unaccountable persuasion, that something of good or of evil follows the visits of certain persons, who, when the thing comes to pass, are found to have had neither affinity with the circumstances, nor influence on the event? The hand of the horologe indexes the movements of the planetary universe; but where is the reciprocal enginery between them?

These reflections, into which I am perhaps too prone to fall, partake somewhat of distemperature and disease; but they are not therefore the less deserving of solemn consideration. The hectic flush, the palsied hand, and the frenzy of delirium, are as valid, and as efficacious in nature, to the fulfilment of providential intents, as the glow of health, the masculine arm, and the sober inductions of philosophy. Nor is it wise, in considering the state and frame of man, to overlook how much the universal element of disease affects the evolutions of fortune. Madness often babbles truths which make wisdom wonder.

I have fallen into these thoughts by the remembrance of the emotions with which I was affected during the journey with Mrs Ormond. During that journey, I first experienced the foretaste of misfortune, and heard, as it were afar off, the groaning wheels of an unknown retribution coming heavily towards me.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN we had travelled about half-a-dozen miles, we entered one of the great highways of the kingdom, and soon after came to an inn, where we changed horses. Our next halt was in a

village, through which I must have passed when first taken to be placed under the care of Mrs Ormond; for a yew-tree on the green, cut into the shape of a lion, reminded me of having been there before; and I directed the attention of Mrs Ormond towards it, as a proof that the things which I had been relating were historical, and not, as she would have persuaded me to think, but fantastical and imaginary.

She was evidently grieved that my recollection retained such an exact impression of circumstances, which, it was hoped, I had been too young to remember; and she expressed herself with so much sadness at the discovery, that it caused me to sit in silence and reverie during the remainder of our journey.

Having again changed horses, we continued our progress, and in the afternoon reached the stately portal of a great mansion, situated in the centre of a magnificent park; but all around wore the aspect of neglect and decay. When we entered the hall, Mrs Ormond exclaimed that the smell of the damp was as the breath of a sepulchre.

Some preparations had been made for our reception. An old domestic, one of three or four who had charge of the house, conducted us to a parlour, in which a fire had been recently lighted, and a table was already covered. A repast was soon after served up, and I gathered from a conversation between Mrs Ormond and an aged matron, the housekeeper, that we were to abide with her until answers were received from London to letters which had been sent off that morning.

I rejoiced at this; for in coming up the avenue I had seen many hares playing on the lawn, and was gladdened with the expectation of being permitted to chase them. Accordingly, while Mrs Ormond continued in conversation with the housekeeper, I left her for that purpose.

In seeking my way alone back to the vestibule, I happened to enter a large salon, adorned with pictures and mirrors of a princely magnitude. Finding myself in error, I was on the point of retiring, when my eye caught a marble table, on which stood a French clock between two gilded Cupids. The supporters of the table were curiously carved into such chimerical forms as belong only to heraldry and romance.

As I looked around at the splendid furniture with wonder and curiosity, something in the ornaments of that gorgeous table arrested my attention, and made a chilly fear vibrate through my whole frame. I trembled as if a spectre of the past had been before me, claiming the renovation of an intimacy and communion which we had held together in some pre-Adamite state of being. Every object in that chamber I had assuredly seen in in another time; but the reminiscence which the sight of them recalled, fluttered my innocent imagination with fear.

A door opposite to that by which I had entered, led to the foot of a painted marble staircase. I moved tremblingly towards it, filled with an unknown apprehension and awe. I could no longer doubt I was in the same house where, in infancy, I had witnessed such dismay and sorrow; but all was dim and vague; much of the record was faded, and its import could not be read. The talisman of memory was shattered, and but distorted lineaments could be seen of the solemn geni who, in that moment, rose at the summons of the charm, and showed me the distracted lady and the wounded gentleman, whose blood still stained the alabaster purity of the pavement on which I was again standing.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE must have remained at Beechendale Hall about a month; for I remember, on being placed in bed, I happened to notice the new moon shining dimly opposite the window, and bade Mrs Ormond, who, according to her custom, was attending to hear that I said my prayers, look how like it was to a ring—a broken wedding-ring.

How such a thought came into my childish fancy would be useless to conjecture; but the simile so affected her, that she said with a sigh, "Heaven have compassion on this singular boy!" and bending over me, she kissed my forehead, and I felt a tear fall upon my cheek.

I say, we must have remained at Beechendale Hall at least a

month; for I well recollect the waxing of that moon to the full, and the shadows which she threw of the trees on the lawn, fluctuating like the dark waters of little pools and lakes, as the branches were stirred by the wind. Often did I stand admiring from the windows the silvery appearance of the deer in the moonshine, with their horns tipped with glimpses of glittering light, as they moved on their pasture, single or in troops, leaving a wake behind in the dewy grass, like the tracts of ships on the rippling ocean.

On the evening when Dr Bosville arrived to take me to his school, the new moon was come again. It was first observed by the housekeeper, who was standing with me on the steps of the portico, looking at the heavens as they were lighted up, till I became almost persuaded that I saw the angels of the signs and the seasons busily moving to and fro, kindling the stars, one by one, with their links and cressets of glory. Mrs Ormond came to us at the moment, and the housekeeper remarked to her that it was an ominous moon, and betokened grief to the mariner's hearth, so plainly was the corpse of the last seen in its bosom.

What had passed elsewhere, in the mean time, concerning me, was as much beyond the penetration of my young conjecture as the mysteries of destiny. But the first cycle of my life was completed. I had been brought back to the point at which the earliest movements of my retrospective being commenced.

With Dr Bosville I bade the kind and benignant Mrs Ormond farewell. She wept bitterly as she pressed me fondly to her heart for the last time; and I was reluctantly lifted from her embrace, and placed in the carriage beside my judicious but austere preceptor.

"You will have many playfellows," said the doctor, to cheer and encourage me as we drove away from the house; but I scarcely knew what the word signified, and sat silently ruminating about that which is ever uppermost in the thoughts of the simple child and the inquisitive philosopher—What am I? wherefore are all these things, whither am I going, and who awaits to love or to hate me there?

EPOCH II.

CHAPTER I.

THE accidents of fortune are somewhat analogous to the notches in the movements of machinery. The foretokens of the augur and the seer are but parts of the providential enginery ; —such as have been noticed in their recurrence, without the observer being able to trace in what manner the revolving chains and the wedded racks of the wheels were combined in their operations together. The great clock of time hath all its motions from one spring, and the infinity of movements in its universal spheres and orbits, form the demonstration which proves the original impulse to have been Almighty.

But what are those impalpable and substanceless energies which instruct the oracles of fate, and create, by prediction, the desire and purpose that beget the act foretold ? Though they elude the grasp of mortal science, are they not akin to that occult and inscrutable intelligence which oscillates between the ocean and the moon, showing the power of its invisible influences in the tides, or as the communion which the pleiades hold with the flowers, and the signs in the stars with the times and the seasons ?

What a solemn prologue to the tale of a schoolboy's little cares ! Yet, if this story be read aright, it will soon be manifest that the secret homage which we all pay to the sovereignty of the still small voice, heard but in the silence of dread, acknowledges a tremendous sense of some spirit-seen apocalypse. The world may affect not to understand the mystery ; but even the atheistical votary of mathematical truth, will confess at the shrine of some UNKNOWN power of nature, that he himself is indeed a sincere and appalled worshipper of a God and Providence, whose place, faculties, and qualities, are as much hidden from the discernment of philosophy, as the heavens, the powers, and the purposes of the Being which religion has revealed.

CHAPTER II.

DR BOSVILLE'S school was what is called a select seminary. He received but ten pupils, the unacknowledged offspring of splendid misery, or the children of parents who had some sad tragedy of the hearth to conceal.

It was to me, however, a noisy, busy, overreaching world. Hitherto I had been a solitary child, cherished with the unwearied caresses of the most affectionate of women, and charmed into the trances of enthusiasm by the blandishments of the summer sunshine, the music of the winds of autumn, the hallelujahs of the winter storm, and the mighty chorus of the ocean waves.

Never was simple boy less prepared for a scene so new, so harsh, so full of discords to all his gentle feelings. I was overwhelmed, and shrunk from the rude fellowship of my blithe and boisterous companions. I could take no part in their pastimes; but while they were at play in the neighbouring churchyard, I sat on a tombstone, and marvelled with myself what partial blessing of gayety had been bestowed upon them, that I was not permitted to share!

In this mood I continued about two years, shunning, but not shunned; for when the first two or three weeks were over, during which my schoolmates had often tried both to vex and to win me from my moping, they desisted, and gradually began to treat me with compassionate affection. They invited me to see the nests they had discovered; they presented me with the best fish which they caught; and one of them, who had received a little dog from some of his friends, came with two of the elder boys, and begged me to accept it. "He will keep you from being alone," said the generous boys; "and, perhaps, as you do not like our games, he will amuse you with his tricks."

But at the end of the second year a change was produced in the monotony of my reflections, by the removal of one of our companions, and the arrival of another in his place.

Alfred Sydenham was about my own age. The moment we saw one another, we both felt that we had been destined to become friends—and yet it is difficult to imagine how any two

children could have been more differently bred. He had just lost his mother, the splendid and beautiful mistress of a nobleman of the very highest rank : but although he was not permitted to bear his father's name, he was yet regarded by him with all the love and kindness which the parental heart can bestow on an only and a darling child. Nor was he unworthy of that affection which delighted to lavish upon him every indulgence.

It is impossible to imagine a creature more elegantly formed than Sydenham was in his boyhood. His dreadful wounds, and the loss of both his arms at the siege of V*****, were not sufficient to destroy the extraordinary gracefulness of his maturer years ; but all his personal endowments were as the anatomy of the frame to the beauty of living youth, compared with the delightful felicity of his temper, and the mild yet joyous elements of a spirit which was too noble and generous for the business of life, too sensitive to bear the rubs of adversity. His father died suddenly, without having properly secured the provision he had intended to make for him. Litigation, in an endeavour to establish his claim with the heir, exhausted his means ; he had no resources, for he had lost his hands, and therefore he—died.

CHAPTER III.



THE arrival of Sydenham was indeed to me an era. Before that event my feelings were all loose and objectless : I longed for something that I could be kind to, and I felt and believed myself to be a forlorn and unaffiliated thing.

He awoke the sympathy of fraternal affection, which, till then, had been asleep in my bosom ; all the premature anxieties of my orphan state were diminished, by being shared in confidence with him ; and, by the emulation to equal him in our tasks, he gave me the first taste of the pleasure of being in earnest.

He regularly spent the holydays with his father ; and it happened, in the course of the summer of the third year after he came to Dr Bosville's, that he brought me an invitation from

the duke to accompany him, at Christmas, to B—— Castle. We were then both but in our twelfth year; the circumstances, however, in which we had been respectively placed, had taught us to observe with a spirit of more maturity.

The old magnificence of the castle, a rude and vast pile, interested me for the two first days.

It stands on the verge of a precipice, which overshadows a smooth-flowing river. Masses of venerable trees surround it on the other three sides, from the midst of which huge towers, with their coronals of battlements, and cloaks of ivy, look down upon the green and bowery villagery of the valley, with the dark aspect of necromancy, and the veteran scowl of obdurate renown. It is indeed a place full of poesy and romance. The mysterious stairs, and the long hazy galleries, are haunted by the ever-whispering spirits of echo and silence; and the portraits and tapestries of the chambers make chivalry come again.

The arrival of visitors, and the stir of the numerous servants, would soon have changed the solemn mood and legendary cast of my reflections, had I not discovered, in the person of one of the guests, that undivulged stranger of the rock, Mr Oakdale.

Six years had so altered my appearance, that he did not recognize me, though I remarked, when he first observed me, that something like a sudden reminiscence moved him for a moment; it, however, passed away, and, during the remainder of his visit, he took no particular notice of me.

I knew him again at the first sight; and, having made Sydenham acquainted with the discovery, we resolved to search, by all possible means, into the secrets of his story.

He had still the same pale and thoughtful countenance which had first attracted my attention; but there was now an air of ease and worldliness about him that I had not observed before. Perhaps the impassioned state of his mind, during his solitary sequestrations from society, had affected the habitude of his manners at that time.

But although both Sydenham and myself were all eye and ear to every thing which related to Mr Oakdale, he was yet several days in the castle before any thing occurred to afford the slightest clue to the gratification of our intense curiosity. At last, one

day when, according to custom, we were summoned after dinner to partake of the dessert, Sydenham chanced to overhear him say, with reference to some public circumstance which Mr Oakdale did not well recollect, that it must have happened while he was abroad.

"How long is it," said Sydenham, "since you were abroad?"

"About seven years," was the answer. I heard the reply, and I observed that it attracted general notice.

"In what country were you?" subjoined the ingenious boy.

The question made Mr Oakdale change colour; and Sydenham, without waiting for an answer, added, eagerly, "And what made you go abroad?"

The duke, who overheard what was passing, hastily called the young inquisitor away; but not until he had inflicted, as I could plainly discern, a touch of torment on the penitent.

CHAPTER IV.

TREMENDOUS and impenetrable destiny, wherefore is it that I have ever been doomed to despondency, like a blighted plant that languishes beneath the frown of an eclipse? Come not all things to pass as Providence hath pre-ordained they should be? What, then, does it avail to the agency of fate-fettered man that he has faith in the warning of oracles, the science of the augur, or the vision of the prophet, when all things that shall be are already registered in the eternal chronicles of heaven as past and done?

But these thoughts come too often and too fast upon me. I must endeavour to master them, else shall I never be able to complete my little story with the brevity that befits a tale of a single feeling. Bear, however, with me; for it is my comfortless instinct to observe how it hath pleased Providence to make the falsest promises of fortune ever appear the fairest. What are we all, indeed, but simple victims, pleased with the wreaths by which we are led forward to sacrifice!

I thought that Sydenham was given to me as an indemnity for the companionless melancholy of my orphan childhood; but he was fated only to widen the horizon of the desert, like the Arabian guide who conducts the traveller to view the skeletons of Palmyra, and abandons him in the midst of the desolation and the waste.—But enough of this, let me proceed.

The duke having whispered to Sydenham that he wished to see him in his closet in the morning, we soon after left the dining-room together, and, retiring to the apartment allotted to us, we compared our observations. Young as we still were, we both came to the same conclusion—some bad thing had happened to Mr Oakdale, which he and his friends desired to forget and should be forgotten.

Is it credible that from that night Sydenham and myself, though we lived long together, and, to the eyes of all who knew us, were companions of singular constancy, should yet for years have never held any communion as friends?

A spell was invoked upon his frankness; and while he appeared in no measure less attached, yea, even while he showed a deeper feeling of affection for me, (for I often caught him looking at me with pity till his eye overflowed,) it was but too evident that he stood in awe of my unhappy destiny, and beheld the spectre which ever followed me—the undivulged horror, of which my conscious spirit had only the dim knowledge, that dread and bodements sometimes so wonderfully and so inexplicably give.

CHAPTER V.

NEXT morning Sydenham and I met as usual in the park. I had been abroad before him, for the little incident of the preceding evening had affected me with a painful curiosity. I had no rest; or, if at times sleep for a moment did alight on my eyelids, it was suddenly scared away by fearful dreams—the brood of fancy and of memory—diseased, hideous, and sorrowful.

Nor was the aspect of the morning when I rose of a kind to

allay my unhappy mood. Even for the season it was dismal, and a preternatural gloom made the dawn more awful than the night. There was a silence all around such as my spirit had never before felt. A severe frost had hushed the murmuring of the river; the wind was still, and the woods, encrusted with icicles, were also dumb. The cold had made every stirring thing cower within its nest or lair; and the air, and the fields, and the boughs, were mute, and forsaken. Nothing living was seen, no sound heard; and when I looked out at the castle gate, and saw the shrubs on the lawn standing in the dim haze of the twilight, all in winding-sheets of hoar-frost, they seemed like monuments in a churchyard, and reminded me of the dead, and of sepulchres, and spectres!

Thus it happened that Sydenham found me full of superstitious sadness. With his wonted kindness, and with that pleasing gayety, the delightful quality of his unrivalled and invincible temper, he endeavoured to cheer me; but the topic he chose was calculated to produce a far different effect. He spoke triumphantly of the impression he had produced on Mr Oakdale, and assured me that we could not fail soon to discover the secrets of his story. I was persuaded that those secrets were fraught with evil and woe to me.

Our conversation lasted till the breakfast-bell summoned us in, and nothing farther occurred at that time. After breakfast, according to the appointment, he went to his father, who had not made his appearance that morning. He remained with the duke, it might be about an hour. I know not how it was that this incident should have in any degree interested me, but it did so, and I longed impatiently, and with some degree of fear, for his return.

At last he came, and the moment I saw him I perceived he was no longer the same free, open-hearted companion to me that he had been. His countenance showed he had been told of something which had moved his wonder and sorrow. He, however, came towards me, and I advanced to meet him, but suddenly he turned round and ran away. All the remainder of the day he kept aloof from me; and I remarked in the evening,

when, as usual, we were called in to the dessert, that he twice or thrice looked at Mr Oakdale with a strange earnestness, and a shudder, as it were, of aversion.

When we retired to our own room, he forgot himself for a moment, and in playfulness laid his hands upon my shoulders as we were going along the gallery, as if with the intention to leap upon my back; but in the very act he halted, and thoughtfully, yet with much kindness, said, that he was going to his own bed-chamber to read, and immediately retired; I, too, went to mine, but neither to read nor to find repose.

CHAPTER VI.

NEXT morning a letter was brought to me from Dr Bosville, by a gentleman, who, as the doctor informed me, was appointed to conduct me to Eton.

Towards Dr Bosville I had never felt any degree of attachment. His manners were naturally cold and reserved, and his professional duties had given him a habit of methodical austerity repulsive to youth. But the stream often runs pure and strong beneath the ice. His letter was full of parental tenderness, and contained compassionate expressions, which could only have been dictated by some knowledge of the evil impending in my fate. Among other regrets, he lamented that he had been obliged to part with me so prematurely and so suddenly; a circumstance which led me to imagine that the unknown ruler of my destiny was moved to the order by something in the accident of my visit to B—— Castle, and the estrangement of Sydenham confirmed me in that opinion.

The duke kindly entreated my conductor to allow me to stay out the holydays, and urged him to remain with me; but his instructions were so peremptory, that I was not permitted to stop even another day.

I do not recollect the name of that gentleman, nor is it of any

consequence I should. He was a boisterous and offensive person, crimsoned in the face with irascibility and intemperance. He had been in the army, and was a major.

On alighting at the gate of the college, an officer, belonging to a regiment of the Guards, then quartered in Windsor, came up and shook hands with him; and I gathered, with greedy ears, from their conversation, that it was at the request of an old general, a mutual friend of both, he had become, as he termed it, bear-leader, for the day, of me. Had the name of the general then been mentioned, or had I not been withheld by remorseless and incomprehensible Fate from asking it, what sorrow, what misery, what guilt, had been averted!

But it comes of the structure of man to forget that the worm he was created to be food to, may be of higher consequence in the scheme of the universe than he who hath proclaimed himself the paragon of animals, and the glory of the earth! In the dream of his imagined dignity, he looks for omens and prodigies to warn him of the woes which in this world he was born to suffer. Yet what are portents but the signs of things that have been—funereal pagentry! Nature and destiny execute their greatest purposes by invisible engines. The pestilence travels in darkness—wars are often begotten of the undetermined maladies of minions or of ministers. The element of fire is viewless in the combustible—a pebble hath turned the roaring waters of a mighty flood—death is silent, and Omnipotence on all His universal thrones is alike unsearchable and unseen.

How is it that we never think of applying this stupendous demonstration to the circumstances of man, constantly admonished, as we are, that the turns of fortune are produced by trifles, whose seeming insignificance in occurrence alone causes them to be disregarded. The germ is implanted in the past—the rich soil of the cemetery of the past—and often slow is the growth of that tree which at last overshadows the present, and scatters its baleful seedlings far into the regions of hereafter.

CHAPTER VII.

UPWARDS of six years had elapsed since I was consigned by Mrs Ormond to the care of Dr Bosville, and I was still as ignorant of the world as when I parted from her maternal bosom. Some of the jealousies and petty frauds of school-boys I had, in the mean time—shall I say—acquired? No, I had but learned that such things were. In all that long mean time of more than six years, the remembrance of her kindness had continued, wrapped in many a fold of my softest feelings, and often in my ruminations have I longed to see her again, and wondered if I ever should.

The major, after introducing me to Doctor —— at Eton, to whose care I was particularly recommended, carried me to dine at an inn in Windsor. On reaching the house, he went into the coffee-room and ordered dinner, and while it was preparing took me with him to walk on the terrace.

The evening was cold and raw; a foggy and foul easterly wind blew in gusts, and filled the wide prospect with untimely obscurity. The sentinels stood shivering in their boxes, and we were fain to return earlier than the major had intended.

All the time from our departure in the morning from B—— Castle, he had but seldom spoken to me. He was evidently discontented with his office. It was a task which must have been forced upon him; for he grudged the performance as if it had been tainted with something of shame.

Two or three times I was struck with his shyness, and particularly so by the emotion and the manner with which he shrunk back, on observing a carriage passing across the bottom of the street, as we returned from the castle. He stopped suddenly, and, with a rude expression and an angry snatch, seized me by the arm, and pulled me abruptly into a shop, where we remained several minutes in frivolous conversation with the young man who kept it.

As we left the shop, he looked warily and anxiously around, and then hurried with precipitation towards the inn, bidding me,

in his roughest manner, follow him quickly. I was doing so, when, in turning the corner of the Town-hall, I happened to observe two ladies at the balcony windows of the inn. One of them was much younger than the other, and her hair and dress were elegant and fashionable; but it was the elder that arrested my eyes, for I discovered in her my dear and excellent Mrs Ormond.

I knew her at once. She wore, as usual, a black lace cap over one of white cambric; she had also on the same sort of black silk mittens I had been accustomed to see her wear, and she possessed the same pale and benign countenance.

I stopped for a moment to look at her, in the hope she would notice and recollect me; but the major, who had by this time entered the inn door, turned round and chided me for lingering.

The harshness of that man's behaviour had wounded my morbid delicacy; and though I was burning with impatience to throw myself into the arms of my venerable friend, I had yet no power left to tell him what I wished, nor to do what I so earnestly desired! I recollect it as an instance of his heartlessness, that, instead of going with me to Eton, he ordered the porter of the inn to take me home, while he continued at his wine.

In the morning I rose betimes, and hastened to the inn, in the hope of finding Mrs Ormond still there—but she was gone. She and the other lady had returned to London the preceding evening, and the major had accompanied them in their carriage.

CHAPTER VIII.

WELL do I remember with what feelings of disappointment and of grief, chastened with wonder, I returned to Eton. I could not but connect the appearance of Mrs Ormond in Windsor, at that particular time, with some undivulged occurrence in my fate. Her acquaintance with the major—his anxiety to avoid observation—the elegant unknown lady—were

all so many ingredients in the spell of mystery by which I was withheld from participating in the common sympathies and enjoyments of my age.

But though these reflections saddened my spirit at the time, they yet generated a motive which gave new energy to my character. I was certain, by what I had observed, that I belonged to the upper ranks of society; and this notion, with the dim reminiscence of my childhood, lent a colouring of probability to a suspicion which I began to entertain, that whatever of guilt or of grief was in the fortunes of my family, had originated with my mother.

During the quiet of the remaining holydays I did nothing but ruminate on this suspicion. Had I been asked, in the course of that time, whether I had noticed the appearance of Windsor Castle, I verily think I must have answered in the negative, so entirely were my thoughts engrossed with my unhappy egotism. But as the other boys came back to college this dejection wore away, and I gradually became a very different creature to what I had ever before been. Without being less reserved than I was at Dr Bosville's, I entered into more fellowship with my companions, and, without having any desire to be more playful than when I was the shy and bashful orphan whom my school-mates were wont to treat with so much gentleness, I became a bold and obstreperous adventurer.

This was not altogether involuntary. I saw that I was now among youths by whom I might obtain some clue to lead me out of the labyrinth in which I was so bewildered; but days, and weeks, and months, and years, passed away, and I remained still unsatisfied. As I grew older, my allowance from Dr —— was gradually increased. I was always treated as an heir to fortune; and, when the vegetable period of life was over, I was restrained by no considerations of pecuniary prudence from participating in the dissipation of my companions.

In this way time passed till I was about seventeen, when Dr —— informed me, that he was instructed to send me to Oxford. The intelligence was received as good news and glad tidings. I felt that but one step more, and I should be in the world, free to act for myself, and free to embark in any enterprise by which

I could hope to discover the secret so carefully and so intricately concealed.

But my joy was somewhat chilled and shaded when the doctor told me, that a gentleman was appointed to call for me at Eton, in order to carry me to Oxford. I recollected the major; and the remembrance of his forbidding manners made me fear it might be him. I was, however, agreeably disappointed.

CHAPTER IX.

It was the Rev. Mr Alsager who came for me; and I soon discovered that he knew nothing whatever either of my previous history or of those occult circumstances in which I was so much interested. Through the medium of some friend he had been appointed to attend me, and, as his allowance was liberal, he treated me with indulgent consideration. More of me than my name he knew not; but, nevertheless, his mild and agreeable deportment soon made me regard him as a friend, and the wisdom of his gentle admonition was a rein and curb upon the extravagance of the career I was beginning at Eton.

To the worth and virtues of this excellent man I am indebted beyond all computation. Whatever of approbation or of favour I afterwards acquired in the world, I owe to his admirable discretion, and to the calm and beautiful address with which he won me from error, and taught me the way which leads to happiness and honour. Alas! I had inherited an ancestral curse, and was not to be excepted from the avenging menace in the Decalogue.

Soon after our arrival at Oxford, I met Sydenham in the street: he had just arrived, and was also entered a gentleman-commoner of the same college. We were both greatly delighted at seeing each other again, and for some time we could not sufficiently congratulate ourselves in being brought so happily together.

But when I reminded him of the circumstances in which we had been separated, a cloud darkened his countenance, and from that moment I perceived that the effects of his father's undivulged communication were still uneffaced.

Often have I regarded it as not one of the least remarkable things in the troubled current of my life, that I never, by any chance, for so long a period, was animated with resolution enough to ask Sydenham what he had heard to make him regard me with so much more of pity than belongs to friendship.

It was, however, so; and I am doomed to rue, for a few days more, the consequences of that strange diffidence which the early impressions of crime and of sorrow—the crime and the sorrow of others—had awakened or implanted in my bosom.

But, notwithstanding the unexplained reserve of Sydenham, we continued always friends; it would be more correct, however, to say companions: for the withholding of that something by which I was to be so much affected, deprived our intimacy of all the cordiality and confidence which belongs to friendship, and in which we were respectively formed by nature to have indulged.

The allowance from his father was as unbounded as the duke's affection; but, unfortunately, his grace was irregular in his remittances, and I was often obliged to become Sydenham's banker: this, too, had its effect in weakening the tie between us. He felt himself reduced below the level of a friend by accepting my assistance. I will not wrong my own nature to say, that the granting of it either diminished my regard for him, or impaired the equality, I might even say the admiration, with which I never ceased to regard his many delightful and noble qualities.

But every thing around me, and with which I became connected, was fated to partake of the disastrous taint of my inheritance. What nature seemed to have made on purpose to contribute to my happiness, was, by the impoisoned influence of parental sin, turned into a source of anguish and of mortification.

The burning marl was prepared for the unblessed foot; and it has been my doom to taste but of bitterness in that cup, wherein all which can gladden and embolden youth was mingled and administered by health and opulence.

CHAPTER X.

IN one of my occasional excursions with Sydenham to London, we happened to go to Drury-Lane theatre when Hamlet was performing. I had heard of Shakspeare, as most University-men commonly do. I was prepared to admire his genius, without having the most remote idea of his merits or of his power. I am not conscious of having read one line of his works, nor do I believe that I had either seen, or desired to see before, any one of his plays in representation.

But the opening of Hamlet is pitched to a key with which I was almost constantly in unison. Of the story I had never heard, though the name of the hero was as familiar to me as to most unbookish students.

As the performance proceeded, I soon felt that the tale it told was shadowed in the conception I had formed of the circumstances of my own fortunes.

The cunning of the scene at one time so overcame me, that I laid hold of Sydenham by the arm, and breathed with such trepidation, that he enquired in alarm if I was unwell. This was when the ghost related in what manner he had been murdered. From that moment I looked forward to see Hamlet in the character of an avenger—terrific, magnificent, and resolved; but when I saw him so soon after become a puling and purposeless misanthrope, I was, for a time, discontented with the whole piece. There was, however, so much of philosophical ingenuity in the plot and stratagem of the player's play, that my attention was again arrested, and I watched with an ardour and earnestness for the result, equal almost to what the Prince of Denmark himself might have felt. At the moment when Hamlet is satisfied of his uncle's guilt, I started from my seat, and the first object that caught my eye was Mr Oakdale in the adjoining box, startled by my emotion.

He looked at me for an instant with the unrecognizing eye of a stranger: he evidently did not then recollect me; but when I had resumed my seat, and he had looked again towards the stage for about the space of a minute, he suddenly threw his eyes

towards me, as with apprehension and dread. My agitation at that moment was too great to give utterance to my feelings. I rose and hurried from the box, followed by Sydenham, who, alarmed at my extravagance, came with me out of the theatre.

I said nothing. As we moved on, he often entreated me to tell him what was the matter; but there was a flashing of recollections and imaginations overwhelming my reason; and it was not until we were by ourselves, in a private parlour in one of the neighbouring taverns, that I was in any condition to hear or to answer his questions.

I placed my elbows on the table, and clasped my temples in my hands, remaining in that position silent for some four or five minutes.

"Now, Sydenham," said I at last, "I can believe what I have heard of the genius of Shakspeare."

"Is that all?" said he with a smile, intended, doubtless, to allay the perturbation, which he ascribed to the poetry and the performance; and he added, "I never should have conceived, however, that any thing in so heavy a drama as Hamlet could have moved you to such a degree;" and then he began to descant as a critic on the talents of the author.

What he said, or what he meant to have impressed me with, sounded in my ear unheeded, and I cried abruptly; "Cease, you know nothing of his genius: he has told me to-night what I had before but, as it were, dreamt of."

"Well! what has he told you?"

"That my father has been murdered."

Sydenham grew pale, and lay back in his chair in astonishment.

"Nay more," cried I; "he has told me, that the crime was caused by my mother."

Sydenham trembled and rose from his seat, exclaiming, "Is this possible?"

"Yes, and you have known it for years: and that Mr Oakdale is the adulterous assassin!"

EPOCH III.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Sydenham came to me in the morning, I was calm and collected. "I am glad to see you in that state," said he; "and I hope, before you take any resolution, you will return with me to Oxford. Many years have now elapsed since the event took place, and neither of us have any friend with whom we can consult on a subject of such delicacy."

"Rely upon it," replied I, "this incident has not come to pass as a chance, but as a cause—something will follow from it, or some other thing has happened with it, that will speak as imperatively to me as the ghost did to Hamlet. These are the things which are not dreamt of in your philosophy; of such substance are the restless spirits that divulge guilt, and the un-houselled spectres that avenge crime. But what you say is just and wise.—Let us return to Oxford."

Little more passed at that time: I was too much occupied with my own cogitations to notice or to think of any other topic than the frightful and humiliating vision which, in a thousand shapes and horrors, filled the whole compass of my imagination.

We arrived at our college, almost, I may say, without having exchanged a word; but on entering my room, I was surprised to see upon my table a note, of which the superscription was in an unknown hand. As I lifted it, glancing at the seal, I said to Sydenham, "Here is the principal to which the incident of last night was but the herald."

The note was from General Oglethorpe; it was brief, merely stating that he was unknown to me, but had business of such importance to communicate, that he would wait in Oxford till I returned from London.

At that juncture the general was announced, and I immediately went forward to receive him.

His appearance was precise, erect, and professional; his com-

plexion bore the impress of foreign climates, and his thin hair, though covered with powder, was bleached by the influence of other changes than those of age.

Sydenham was about to retire, which the general observing, requested him to remain; and turning to me, said, "Is this the young gentleman of whom I have heard as your particular friend?"

I was struck with the espionage over me which this incidental expression revealed, and said coldly, "It is Mr Sydenham."

"Then," replied the general, "I have nothing to say here," laying a particular emphasis on the last word, "to which he may not be privy;" and again turning to me, he held out his hand, and with a slight accent of emotion, betraying the sensibility he endeavoured to restrain, he added, "Nephew!"

In the surprise of the moment I retreated from him; but instantly recovering my self-possession, I bent forward and seized his proffered hand between both of mine, with feelings of which it were in vain to attempt any description.

"This," said the general, "is not a fit place to tell you my errand, or to explain the reasons which have occasioned me to make somewhat abruptly this sudden disclosure of our connexion but the time was fast coming when it could no longer be delayed. I have therefore come to take you with me for a few days, and I have made arrangements with the master for your absence. To you the journey cannot be unpleasant, for it is to carry you to a princely inheritance that has long been your own, and I expect you, with the least possible delay, to accompany me to Beechendale Hall."

I remembered the name: the place, and every object around it, had been engraved on my memory, and treasured in my breast, from the time I had resided there with Mrs Ormond. Sydenham, too, was acquainted with the name; for I had often spoken of the place to him, and he was scarcely less surprised than I was myself.

Nothing more particular then happened. The old general, who was exceedingly formal, but withal courteous, retired to the Star Inn, to give the necessary orders for our departure; while Sydenham remained with me in a state of amazement scarcely less

superstitious, as it may be called, than my own. He said little; but sometimes he lifted the letter and looked at it, and then walked across the room, and asked me, with a degree of earnest anxiety, how I felt.

CHAPTER II.

THE old general told his tale in that state of commanded sensibility with which a gentleman endeavours to possess himself, when convinced he cannot but produce irremediable affliction. His communication was indeed calculated to turn the May of hopeful feeling into the sere and yellow of withered disappointment.

My mother's father was his brother, and she was the sole heiress of her maternal ancestors, from whom she inherited the splendid domain of Beechendale, and whose surname I bore—my father was a young gentleman, richer in heraldry than possessions, with whom she accidentally had become acquainted. Her passion for him was rash and prodigal: even before she presented him with her hand, she made him master of all her inheritance, reserving for herself only a settlement comparatively inconsiderable.

I was the sole offspring of their sudden fondness; but scarcely had I been brought into the world, when her fickle affections withdrew from the husband of her youthful devotion, and clung with the same warmth and recklessness to another object. I do not recollect whether General Oglethorpe said that Mr Oakdale was the first minion of her infidelity; but from this topic I may retire: over the shame of a parent, filial reverence has ever been permitted to draw a veil.

When my father discovered her intimacy with Mr Oakdale, that hideous scene ensued, the remembrance of which still hovers in the dreamy reminiscences of my earliest childhood; but he was not killed, only wounded in the scuffle.

Mr Oakdale fled, and was not for years heard of—it was

during that time he inhabited the widow's cottage—my mother also made her escape to the continent.

My father, under the influence of some relic of tenderness for the fond extravagance with which she had lavished her vast fortune upon himself, abstained from instituting any legal proceedings against her. "He was, indeed," said the general, "a gentleman of singular delicacy; and though he recovered from his wound, he yet did not long survive the humiliation of dishonoured affection."

Immediately after the discovery, I was sent to my grandmother; but the event had broken her heart: for it was supposed that my father's wounds were mortal, and he was her only child.

On the death of that venerable lady, I was consigned to the care of Mrs Ormond, who had been governess to my mother, and who had never ceased to deplore the errors of her beautiful and favourite pupil; and General Ogleshorpe was appointed by my father the special guardian of my education.

"I had thought," said the general, "that my niece would not interfere with an arrangement framed with so much kindness towards herself, nor, indeed, till long after your father's death, did she make any attempt even to see you. It happened, however, that one day, observing in the newspapers some account of the Christmas festivities at B***** castle, when Mr Oakdale was there; and knowing, I do not well recollect how, that you were then also at the castle, a sudden instigation of shame and contrition made her, on the instant, order your removal to Eton. Except in that instance, I have never been obliged to exercise the authority with which I was invested; but a proceeding so peremptory on her part called for equal sternness on mine, and you have ever since been entirely under my control."

From the manner in which my guardian thus expressed himself, I was led to imagine that it was he who had sent the coarse and unmannerly major to place me at Eton. On such slender pivots as such imaginings do the influences of fortune often turn.

The secret I had so long thirsted to know being at last disclosed, I enquired eagerly what had become of my mother; but the punctilious veteran refused to tell—he even exacted a promise that I should never seek to discover her.

“ She has dishonoured herself, and us all,” said he proudly; “ and it is charity, yea, affection, to regard her as dead.”

A reason so imperative who could withstand? Yes; I was doomed to give the promise.—Oh, fatal, fatal pledge! But let my pen here pause—let this trembling hand rest for a little while—let me suspend the record of those things which have filled the untimely twilight of my brief, dull day, more full of terrors than all I dread to meet in the starless night which will so soon close around me, in the silent valley and shadow of death.

CHAPTER III.

BEECHENDALE HALL and Park were among the finest in England; but the blood of my father was there in visible stains, and the effects of my mother's guilt, no less indelible, had touched every object with the corrosion of desertion and decay.

When General Ogleshorpe finished his story, and I had wiped away the tears which would not be repressed, I rose and walked towards the door of the library in which we had been sitting. He followed me, holding his hat in his hand. We passed into the salon in silence. I looked around for a moment on the gorgeous furniture, and my eye falling on the rich and curious table with the French clock, I became so agitated by the wild and hurried recollections which the sight recalled, that I could no longer master myself; but bursting into a paroxysm of inexpressible grief, exclaimed, “ General, let this house be demolished; see the work properly done. It is but a monument of guilt, foul with my father's blood! and fouler with my mother's shame!”

The tear stood upon the cheek of the honourable veteran, and without speaking he shook me cordially by the hand, as he covered his face with his hat. The conflict, however, was but for a moment; almost in the same instant he regained his self-possession, and, returning back into the salon, summoned a

servant, and ordered his carriage to be got immediately ready for our departure.

"We shall go," said he, "to your paternal inheritance. There you will be reminded of no such scenes of dishonour as have happened beneath these gaudy ceilings, and have sullied this splendour with the tarnish of guilt."

I followed him to the carriage without speaking, and the same evening we reached Throstle Grove, the antique gothic portal of which, the wide low hall, the beetling lintel of the huge chimney adorned with the family escutcheon, and the parlour beyond, with the portraits of knights and warriors in armour, revived all the slumbering recollections of the first adventures of my ill-starred mirthless childhood.

It was a homely but ancestral mansion, full of a sober household dignity. Something of the good olden time every where bore testimony to the heartiness and good cheer of manorial hospitality, and a grave and motherly comfortableness reigned throughout. The old domestics, both in appearance and manners, were becoming to the dwelling.

"This," said I, as we entered the parlour, "this, general, shall be my home—the very air here is sweetened with the remembrance of indescribable kindness.—I feel, as it were, again on the soft lap of affection, and the fingers of venerable love wandering amidst the tangled curls of my infantine hair."

The excellent old man remained with me about a week, during which it was determined I should not return to Oxford; but, as soon as the requisite arrangements could be made, proceed to the continent for a year or two. These occupied several months.

The chain and the fetter were, however, upon me, and, despite of resolution and intent, I was dragged to my appointed doom. The coming shadows of inevitable misfortune had always, indeed, darkened and chilled my spirit; but it was not until left to decide for myself, that I felt how much I was entangled within the irresistible eddies of the stream of destiny, which, like the wide and shoreless Hellespont of the Atlantic, never knows a returning tide.

CHAPTER IV.

ON the evening preceding my departure for Harwich, I ordered my groom to have the horses at the door by break of day; but when I rose in the morning, an unwonted depression, beyond the habitual heaviness which ever weighed upon my heart, made me linger and reluctant to depart; and yet the universal aspect of the heavens and the earth was bland and gracious, and the glorious harmonies of the morning and the spring were eloquent with invocations to happiness and tranquillity.

As the horses were brought to the door, the sun rose over the woods and uplands—a few thin streaks of vapour, floating high and beautiful in the great cupola of the world, seemed like praise embodied in incense ascending from the altars of early devotion—and the sadness of my spirit began to yield to the delicious influences of a scene so holy and so calm.

Before mounting, I happened to look towards the wall which separated the lawn from the highway—a row of trees and shrubs screened its unsightly appearance, but here and there an opening disclosed a vista of the distant country, and in one of those openings, I observed something seemingly carried on the shoulders of four persons, whose heads only were visible. It passed, and was concealed by the trees; but it had seized my attention, and I followed it with my eye. When it came to the next opening I saw it plainer, and could trace the outlines of a human form covered with a sheet, which, in several places, was stained with blood.

This sight darkened the splendour of the morning, and withered the beauty of the spring. I instantly leaped into my saddle, and, clapping spurs to my horse, was soon at a distance from the inauspicious omen.

When I reached the first stage, where I intended to breakfast, I sent my servant forward to the village, but, on alighting, I found the house almost deserted; a little girl and the hostler, an old grey-headed man, were the only persons who made their appearance. Having given my horse to the latter, I desired the

girl to get breakfast ready, but she replied it would be necessary to wait till her mistress or some of the other servants came back.

"Where are they?" said I, "and when do you expect them?"

"They are all gone to the village—every body is gone to the village. Are not you, too, sir, going to the village?"

"Yes, I am on my way, but I am going to a far distant country."

I know not how it was that I should have so expressed myself to one so young and simple, but my thoughts were adrift; I was scarcely aware of what I said.

The child looked at me curiously, and I was struck with a remarkable momentary cast in her eyes when she replied, as I paused:—

"You may go to the village, but you will find no one there who will help you forward to-day."

"Why—what has happened in the village—why are all the people gone thither this morning?"

"Have you not heard?" said she, in a low apprehensive whisper, looking timidly around, and drawing closer towards me.

I yielded to the sympathy which her manifest dread and awe awakened—as she added, coming nearer and nearer—"They carried it past in the grey of the morning—we heard a noise, and looked out at the windows. The daylight had not begun to show itself, but it is the last quarter of the moon—they say it betokens no good when such things chance in the wane of the moon—and we saw it by her waning light."

"What did you see?"

"There were four," replied the little maiden, with the same emphatic and mystical look which had so particularly attracted my attention—"I saw them black in the moonshine. They were speaking, but I could not discern their voices—I heard only the murmuring of their tongues. As we were looking and listening, the wind came rustling from the trees, and lifted aside the shroud."

She shuddered, and graspingly took me by the hand for a moment, unable to describe what the wind had revealed—and

then she flew into the house, and, bolting the door, would not be entreated to open it.

I immediately called to the hostler to bring back my horse—and I resolved to ride at once to the village. It is singular I should never have thought of questioning the hostler; but the sight I had seen, the apparitional spectacle which the girl described in those few and feature-like touches, and above all, her own spiritual look, absorbed every other idea. It was not until I left the house more than a mile behind, that I began to marvel at my absence in not asking the hostler what had happened.

CHAPTER V.

As I approached the village, I met several persons coming from it together, in very earnest and serious conversation. They all turned aside as I rode towards them, evidently shunning me, that they might not be disturbed—and their shyness made me pass them without speaking.

About a furlong, perhaps less, from the entrance to the village, stands a single cottage of an antique and picturesque appearance. The chimneys are curiously formed, and seem as if they had once belonged to some great mansion, but the windows are small, and grotesquely ornamented. It is placed within a little garden, enclosed on three sides by an ancient wall, covered with fruit-trees and vines; in front of the house, the wall, however, is less than half the height of the other three sides, and the space between it and the house is planted with flowers, pansies, and hollyhocks of rank and luxurious vegetation.

As I drew near towards it, a number of children and old women were standing along the outside of the dwarf wall, all looking anxiously and in silence at an aged crone who was busy washing several articles of apparel. An employment so ordinary, to occasion so much wonder and solemnity, made me halt and join them, and a strange fantasy took possession of my imagination; nor was it without reasonable cause, for as the old

woman turned over the clothes, broad and gory stains were exposed to view, at the sight of which the spectators uttered a low involuntary murmur of horror.

At that moment two men, carpenters by their appearance and the tools in their hands, came out of the house, bringing with them one of those boards on which country people lay out their dead. As they turned aside to place the board against the wall, I saw it had been recently besmeared with blood, and wiped in so careless a manner, that the marks were still fresh and wet.

I called to one of them and enquired what had happened, but he answered me with coarse and audacious ribaldry. A few words, however, satisfied, or rather appalled my curiosity; for the story resembled the tragedy of my own home, and I turned from him with humiliation and disgust. But my mind was then elevated and solemn, and the indignation which his licentiousness provoked, filled me with the fanaticism of a sublime anticipation.—I felt, as it were, divine impulses, prompting me to holy enterprises—a light, a halo seemed to be shining around me. I was no less to myself, in the mood of that impassioned moment, than one chosen and fated to fulfil the part of an avenger.—Alas! I have been but predestined to rue and to endure the miseries of those crimes, which, in the holy enthusiasm of indignant resolution, I had fancied myself commissioned to weed from the world.

CHAPTER VI.

ON reaching Harwich, I found the packet clear for sea; and my baggage, which had been sent from Throstle-grove the evening before, was already on board.

For a few minutes, after ascending on deck, the novelty of the scene, the bustle of the sailors, and the haste and hurry of departure, interested me; but the remembrance of the morning's incidents soon regained their influence, and I retired to my

cabin, abandoned to the bodements with which I had become infected.

The captain did not arrive on board till the tide began to ebb. It was then dark: the skies were clouded and lowering; but there was scarcely any wind, and we drifted more than a mile after weighing anchor, before the breeze had strength enough to make the ship answer to her rudder.

During the din and activity of unmooring, I left my cabin, and, going upon the quarterdeck, leaned against the railing, and allowed free scope to the melancholy humour which pervaded my comfortless reflections.

As the vessel was kedged towards the harbour's mouth, the sullen aspect of the heavens grew less menacing;—here and there a star glimmered out between the clouds;—the occasional breathings of the wind upon the sails, and the rippling of the sea against the side of the ship, took also something away from the monotony of night; but yet the change only served to awaken a more dismal train of associations.

The slow funereal motion of the vessel felt as the sensible gliding away of time; the glimmering stars, peeping dimly, and but at intervals, from beyond the clouds, seemed imperfect witnesses, bearing testimony to the being of another world; and imagination, in the breathing airs and murmuring waters, found some remote accordance to the sighs and regrets heard around the bed of death. This dark and sad enthusiasm was deepened in its feelings by the dawning light of the rising moon, which gave to the obscure outline of the receding land an appearance as fearful and mysterious as if the pall of oblivion had been raised from the corpse of some stupendous being.

By the time we had reached the open sea, which a breadth and freedom in the motion of the ship soon announced, the moon was several degrees above the horizon; the clouds were become fleecy, and their seams, through which the stars glimmered, unfolded wide and beautiful vistas of the constellations, shining in the holiness of their sublime tranquillity. The ocean also was brightened; and the waves, as they moved gently before the breeze, showed their white manes to the moon.

As the ship, with all her canvass spread, held her course

before the wind, I retired from the railing against which I had been leaning, and stretched myself on the coops, with my hands beneath my head, looking to the star of the zenith, and giving to the fleecy clouds, as they changed their forms, the lineaments of shrouded spirits in solemn transit from the earth to another world. In this state of superstitious rumination, I beheld a small dense black cloud on the verge of a hazy mass of vapour, which obscured, but did not entirely conceal the moon. I watched its progress, till I fancied I could discern the dim form of two vast hands bearing that sarcophagus thing between them.

My blood grew cold, and my flesh began to crawl on my bones, as I continued to trace the development of that phenomenon; for at last I distinctly discovered the whole figure to which those mighty hands belonged, and beheld, as it were, the Ancient of Days garmented in shadows; his beard flowing over his breast, with the hoary affluence of priestly antiquity.

Suddenly the casket he held appeared to open; in the same moment a deep low whisper of dread and wonder rose from all on board the ship.

I started up, shuddering with horror at the hideous portent; and the ship-dog, a black and sullen cur, came running cowering and terrified towards me.—His eye glanced at the Omen, as if he said to me, "Look!" and, gazing in my face, he began to howl, with fearful pauses between, in which the seamen thought they heard voices afar off, answering from the clouds and the waves; and they boded no less than of shipwreck to themselves, and a watery winding-sheet to me.

CHAPTER VII.

As the breeze freshened, the motion of the vessel increased, till it made the all-absorbing anguish of physical suffering overpower every faculty of my mind; but our passage to Hamburg was speedy, and to the sailors pleasant. The passengers were landed in the afternoon of the following day.

While I was standing on the wharf after having been put ashore, an English gentleman, with a young lady leaning on his arm, came towards me. Their appearance, and the familiarity between them, showed they were father and daughter.

He possessed a noble military presence, and though somewhat faded from the grace of youth, was still in the lustre of manhood. But why speak of one so well known, and so universally admired for his personal elegance? It was General Purcel—need I add, and poor Maria, who, as she hung upon his arm, smiled in his face with those eyes of loveliness that the epicure worm was so soon to make his prey, and those lips, more beautiful and richer with delight than the rosy morning. Ha! to what am I betrayed?

But unless I describe the feelings, unfelt before, with which I first beheld that exquisite creature, how shall the dreadful issues of our terrific tale be ever rightly understood! Yet, I will restrain my impassioned pen, for it were guilt now to speak of her as my heart prompts.

The general, on approaching, addressed me with an agreeable urbanity. He was waiting with his family for a fair wind to pass over to England. "We have been several years," said he, "on the continent; but my wife has at last become alarmed at the progress of the French, and the disorganization of society which ensues wherever they come."

He then enquired the latest news. I had nothing, however, particular to report; and, finally, while my servant was getting the baggage ashore, we walked saunteringly towards a carriage in which Mrs Purcel was sitting.

I cannot describe the singular and delightful flutter into which I was thrown by the voice and smile of that lady. I felt as if I could have leaped into her arms, and fondled in her bosom. This ecstasy was, however, but for a moment, for Maria was at my elbow; and the matronly graces of her mother awakened but a momentary feeling of childish joy, compared with the glowing sentiment which her smile and beauty had kindled in my bosom. Yes; the emblem of love is fire, and like the element it resembles, when once lighted in two pure and faithful hearts, the mingling flame, increasing as it burns, points to the

divine source whence its bright and beauteous element first emanated.

In the mean time, the wind, which had been for some time constantly increasing, began to blow with violence; the clouds thickened, and the squally showers came nearer and nearer.

Mrs Purcel, while alone in the carriage, had remarked the augmenting symptoms of a storm more than any of the party; and declared she would not embark until the weather assumed a more favourable aspect. After some little domestic altercation, the general consented to return with her to their hotel, which he recommended to me as the best in the city. I required, however, no recommendation to prefer it. It was the residence of Maria, and I was fascinated.

General Purcel having placed his daughter in the carriage beside her mother, politely offered to walk with me, and we proceeded together by its side.

During the course of our walk, and particularly after I had entered their apartment in the hotel, I was several times put out of countenance by the intense earnestness with which Mrs Purcel occasionally looked at me. She was evidently of a gay disposition, and her manners were singularly elegant and playful; but now and then a shade overcast the brightness of her countenance, and she appeared at times uneasy, impatient, and altogether strangely affected towards me. I did not, however, much remark this at the time; for Maria was present, and my whole soul was occupied with her.

Having continued with them longer than good manners would have allowed, I thanked the general for his attention, and retired. Scarcely, however, had I quitted their apartment, when I felt myself embarrassed by having neglected to inform them of my name—if neglect it can be called—which was the effect of the insurmountable backwardness I ever felt in announcing myself to strangers, lest the history of my mother's errors should be known to them, and thereby recalled to mind. Still, in the midst of the irksome reflections with which I was affected, I enjoyed moments of a fluttering and unspeakable pleasure. The image of Maria was radiant in my thoughts and wishes, and hopes and anticipations were mingled with the fond contempla-

tion of so delightful a vision. There was also a charm in the impression I had received of her mother, that saddened while it soothed me, as the moonlight sheds melancholy in the calm of the summer night, when it lightens the silent shores, and silvers the expanse of the waveless sea. But the spell of her mother's influence soon passed, and Maria alone dazzled my imagination.

CHAPTER VIII.

SURELY it is the very error of our nature, a fantasy of human pride, to suppose that man can be wisely ruled by his reason. Are not all our sympathies and antipathies but the instructions of instinct—the guide which we receive direct, original, and uncorrupted from Heaven?

It may be, that we cannot, like choughs and ravens, and the other irrational and babbling oracles of change—being so removed by habit from the pristine condition of natural feeling—predict from our own immediate sensations, the coming of floods and of thunder-storms, nor scent, like the watch-dog, the smell of death, before the purple spot or the glittering eye have given sign or the fatal infection; but have we not an inward sense that is often gladdened and saddened by influences from futurity, as the strings of the harp are prophetic of the mood and aspect of to-morrow? Shakspeare has exquisitely described his belief in this philosophy:—

“The southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves
Fortells a tempest and a blust'ring day.”

And I believe myself to be possessed of the faculty whose power consists of this hereafter sort of discernment;—Sydenham used to call it my genius.

And what is genius but a sort of something which distinguishes one mind from another, as the differences of figure and feature, mien and complexion, individualize the persons of differ-

ent men?—We all hear, and see, and taste, and feel, and smell alike, though some have a keener relish of the enjoyments of one sense than those of another.

Some are delighted by the ear with melodious sounds—others by the eye with well-ordered forms, and the musical distribution of colours: of such are those artists who address themselves to the imagination. The epicure has his paradise in the palate; the voluptuary in his exquisite touch; and I have sometimes thought that the faculty of the poet was liveliest in his smell; for no other revels so luxuriously in the reveries and ruminations of the aromatic summer, nor finds in the perfume of leaves and flowers such delicious reminiscences of wisdom and beauty. Despite, then, of all controversy and metaphysics, it may be said, as the senses are the gates of the mind, that genius sits as warder at that which is best constructed to give entrance, or, perhaps, that which the circumstances of fortune have made the most frequented—quickness of sense, or a habit of observation.

But whether that melancholy foreknowledge, with which I was so often depressed, came of endowment or of custom, it would be thriftless to investigate: for, as an old musician once told me, such things are too shrewd and subtle ever to be tested by philosophy.

He was a German by birth, and came to Oxford to teach the flute. I was one of his pupils; but soon discovering that he was curiously versed in a peculiar experience, I took lessons from him in a study more congenial to my disposition than even music. He had been bred up from his childhood in the band of a regiment; and yet, such was the dominion which his genius had over him, such his fascination to harmonious sounds, that he remained as simple in his morals and imaginations as the shepherd-boy when he tries his first oaten-pipe, alone on the hills, in the calm of a sunny May morning.

“Is not the sense I have of the speech which is in melody,” I have often heard him say, “a gift from heaven? Think you it was given to delight but idle ears? That would be to say, Providence makes fiddle-strings.—No: there is much prophecy in all the sounds of nature, speaking to our instinct; but the use of instinct we have lost, and therefore do not understand them.

Yes ; by the virtue of the oracle in mine ear, I have discovered many things that are among the laws and regularities of nature. Those persons, for example, who particularly delight in the delicacies of chromatic melodies, modulated on a flat key, whether they be composers, performers, or listeners, are seldom long-lived. For the most part, they die before their forty-second year, though a few, by reason of more strength, do sometimes reach to forty-nine. Such truths cannot be put into the crucibles of philosophy." And then he would reckon on his fingers innumerable instances of musicians of that delicate order who died in their youth, adding, "And have I not the witness I most believe in mine own self? I can tell by the key to which the rising corn rustles in the winds of spring, whether the harvest will be plenteous or niggardly ; for the world is but a band of instruments that were all once tuned to the same pitch, the celestial key to which the innocent angels tune their harps. Whenever, therefore, there is any lack of concord with that which was the universal key, expectation will be disappointed, and the harmony of nature vexed with some deficiency. In this lieth the mystery of fortune. Those who, by their vigour and intelligence, should be prosperous in health and in worldly circumstances, and yet are always otherwise, are ever sensible of some discord in the diapason of themselves, which mars the effect of their best endeavours in performance."

One night as I was returning home, I met this curious hypothesist in the street, and bantered him on his being abroad at so late an hour.

"Speak not so," said he, very seriously, "for I am going to die. I have had my warning. As I stood on the bridge, listening to the tongues which the winds give to the leaves of the trees in the neighbouring gardens, making them all to sing like the little cherubim, I heard a requiem for one that is doomed on the morrow to die."

I attempted to speak lightly of his superstition, though his accent curdled my veins ; but he added :—

"And when their hymn was sung, I heard the soft low voice of a willow-tree, singing an old ditty—one with which my mother long, long ago, often lulled me to sleep. By the music

of the requiem, and the pity which was in that melody, I know when I next shall fall asleep, I am never to awaken again."

With these words he left me, and in the morning he was found dead of apoplexy. Who, therefore, shall venture to say, that what the German enthusiast called his gift, his instinct, or his genius, was not some incommunicable faculty which made his spirit as different from that of any other man's, as he was in his person distinguishable from every individual of the universal race?—He had faith, however, in the warning of his fate. I have had but a feeling of the import that was ever in the bode-ments of mine; and by working against it with the traditionary fallacies of reason, I have become—let my story tell what.

CHAPTER IX.

IN the course of the evening, after leaving the Purcells, I walked at random through the city. I had no object in view; curiosity was asleep: the sense of Maria's beauty alone was glowing on my heart, but with something more of sadness than of delight.

She seemed to me a being of too fine an element to be able to withstand the coarse elbowing and pressure of the rude and jostling world; and love was almost refined into compassion, as I thought of that exquisite delicacy, so like the vestment in which the poet sees the benign cherub Innocence looking at helpless Infancy, as he lies smiling in his sleep, with the remembrance of some joy which the newly embodied spirit still retains of its primitive purity—a remembrance so soon to be lost amidst the ails and cares of its incorporation with the dross of mortality.

In that tremulous condition of admiration and tenderness, I continued my aimless sauntering I know not how long. The sound of an organ, as I happened to pass the open door of a church, first dissolved my reverie. I listened for a moment, and then went in.

It was an old edifice of spacious dimensions, a creation of the

gorgeous pageantries of Popery ; but the apostolical agency of the Reformation had ravished the shrines. The austere reason of Martin Luther had substituted the homely benches of polemical attention for the thrones and stalls of sacerdotal pomp, and the altars and imageries of sensual contemplation. The aspect was ancient, not ruinous ; a faded magnificence, still venerable, reminded me of the splendour which had been extinguished ; and a sober twilight bespoke the musings of a more sublime philosophy than those of the faith which is cheered by the flickering of tapers, and nourished by the odour of incense.

I sat down on a rush-bottomed chair under the organ loft. I heard the sound of several voices speaking softly and in whispers around the instrument. The organist, who had been rehearsing the symphony to an anthem, soon after paused. There was nothing in his execution, nor in the subject, to arrest attention ; but still the genius of the place rendered the performance profoundly solemn, and I felt that he would have deepened my enjoyment had he continued to play. A considerable interval of silence and of whispering, however, ensued, and I rose ; when suddenly, as I was on the point of quitting the church, the organ was awakened with a touch of such enchanting power that it made me thrill in every fibre, and after a light, but fanciful prelude, the new performer began an air which came upon me with a delicious and magical influence. A thousand beautiful phantoms of smiles beamed upon me, the pressure of delightful caresses fondly embraced me, and my heart was, as it were, filled with the indescribable laughter of titillation and ecstasy.

Surely, said I to myself, I have heard that air before ; and while I tried to recollect when and where, the musician changed the tune, and played another, which brought the salon of Beechendale Hall, with all its crimson grandeur, the talismanic table, and the mystical French clock, as plainly around me as if I had been seated on the carpet playing with an orange, in the wonderment of childhood.

I continued musing and marvelling at so singular a power, in melodies which were really deserving of no particular attention, till I was roused by the hand of a stranger on my shoulder. It was General Purcel, who, in consequence of his lady complain-

ing of a slight indisposition, had strolled out with Maria, and had, like myself, accidentally entered the church. Yes; it was her gentle fingers, by which those old and simple airs were summoned from the organ, endowed with such metaphysical power as to charm back the forgotten feelings and emotions of my fondled and happy infancy. Alas, alas! I ascribed to the particular interest with which she had inspired me, an influence that belonged only to the notes she had so exquisitely played--a ruder touch and a meaner hand would, perhaps, have made the same stops discourse altogether as persuasively.

END OF EPOCH III.

EPOCH IV.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a beautiful idea of the little boy, and full of poetry too, who, when asked what the mind was, replied, that it must be like a blind child, for its eyes look inwardly.

"We take no note of time," says one of the poets, and it is true; for days, and weeks, and months, and years, pass away, and if they press not the memory with events, have they not, indeed, been as nothing? Verily, doth not all the remembrance we retain of what has chanced, depend on something in the accident, rather than in aught connected with the shadows of the dial-plate? So has it been with ——. I have not been in fault, and will not say the wretch, but only the wretched victim of an inherited penalty.

On the second day after I landed at Hamburg, the Purcells embarked for home. According to an inspection of my rent-roll, made on my return to England, when I met them again, I must have been at least four years separated from Maria; and yet, so constantly and so lovely was her image all the while, beaming, smiling, and blushing, and such a claimant on affection, tender-

ness, and admiration before me, that when I saw her again, I might have declared, with unimpeachable sincerity, we had never, from the moment of our first meeting, been for a moment apart. Sometimes, indeed, the treasuries of Switzerland and Italy might almost be said to have bribed me to forget her; but it was to such forgetfulness as one has of the glorious sun, when looking at a painted window, enriched with stories, and portraits of kings and famous men, the magnificence of great edifices, and scenes of mountain landscapes, mitigating, but deriving all the charm of its interest from his beams. I found some grace and brightness of her every where.

But, do I still dream? Have I not been awakened? Is all this desolated world, this blasted heath, on which I am doomed to perish, and all the alarm of fire and of blood by which I was so roused, but things of the reasonless nightmare? Oh, my heart! my heart!

CHAPTER II.

IN the midst of that trance of enchantment when all was Maria, and whatever was either good, or fair, or beautiful, reminded me of some quality that in her was more excellent, a momentary dread often overcame me, and I wished that I could love her less, or be sure that she might be mine.

Still these causeless cares were soon mastered, for as such they seemed at the time. I regarded them as the envious suggestions of some evil genius: alas! were they not the dismal intimations of my own guardian angel, in his endeavours to quench that forbidden and unholy fire which I thought so pure—"as genial as the light of heaven?"

From the first time on which Mrs Purcel observed my attentions to Maria, her behaviour towards me underwent an embarrassing change. Naturally gay, and for her years full of grace and playfulness, she became thoughtful, and her eyes were often fixed upon me with a pathetic earnestness, and something like solicitation, as if she beseeched my compassion.

I remarked this unaccountable mystery in her manner, and always particularly when I happened in a morning visit to find her alone; often then in conversation her voice would falter while she was addressing me, and she once remarked with a sigh, that surely I had few friends, and wondered at the circumstance, considering my fortune—all indicating desire to obtain my confidence. Many such similar things often escaped from her. But when the General or Maria were present she put on a resolution of gayety, and I could not disguise from myself that she was a woman of consummate art and address.

On one occasion, as we were standing together at a window in the drawing-room, she laid her hand fondly and familiarly on my shoulder. I started at the touch, and she instantly rushed from the room in tears. Could I doubt she regarded me with no common affection?

But even this impassioned extravagance was lost in the all-absorbing influence of Maria, who happened immediately after to come from an adjoining apartment.

In the evening, when I was reading in my lodgings, for this took place in London, the recollection of it suddenly recurred upon me, and I began to ponder on the inconvenience, as I then but thought it, of having interested the mother so much in my favour. I laughed at what I was disposed to regard as an awkward dilemma. In that moment a knocking at the door roused me from my reverie, and Mrs Purcel was herself announced.

CHAPTER III.

HER eyes were sparkling with a wild and insane brilliancy, and the moment the door was shut she cried:—

“If General Purcel will not forbid your visits, I will. I have come to do so: I can endure them no longer—wretches”——

In saying these words, her articulation became choked with passion, and she sunk upon a sofa, overwhelmed with agitation.

I was myself, for the space of several minutes, unable to speak: I stood beside her: when I recovered sufficient composure, I entreated her to moderate her displeasure.

"Displeasure!" said she, with an accent of Siddonian pathos, and looked at me with an expression which could never be forgotten, while she snatched my hand, and bathed it with tears.

"Merciful heaven, madam!" I exclaimed, equivocating with myself; "what does all this mean? Am I not in birth and fortune the equal of your daughter?"

"O yes! O yes!" was her wild reply; and she added, "too much her equal. O miserable me! and you love her too well."

"Why do you say so?" cried I, alarmed and amazed; "such a declaration becomes not a mother and a wife."

"A mother! a wife!—if you could imagine the scorpions which these words exasperate here;" and she smote her heart as she rose from the sofa, and walked hurriedly across the room, tossing her arms aloft, an appalling spectacle of frenzy and despair.

In this terrific state of perturbation she continued for some time. I was overwhelmed with amazement, and stood like a statue. Suddenly she appeared to subdue her emotion, and came towards me with an air of resolute calmness, intending to address me; but in the same moment she burst into such a frantic fit of hysterical laughter, that I became alarmed, and rushed towards the door to call for assistance, believing she was indeed mad. She observed my intention, and with a grasp as dreadful and effective as a fiat, she seized me by the arm.

"Hear me!" she exclaimed; "hear me! O Henry, Henry!"

I shuddered at being so familiarly and so tenderly addressed; but I replied somewhat more self-possessed than I had hitherto been, "Madam, I can be at no loss to understand the cause of this vehemence."

The flash of her eyes withered me for a moment: I paused while she replied:—

"No, no; you do not, you cannot understand it. Sit down on the sofa; sit beside me: I have worked myself to this, and it shall now be done."

In saying these words, she bent her head upon my shoulder,

and wept bitterly. At that moment the sound of a loud knocking reminded me that Sydenham was then to call.

"Is it for you?" said she in alarm; and scarcely had I answered in the affirmative, when she darted out of the room and ran up the second flight of stairs. In the same moment the voice of her husband at the hall-door, enquiring if I was at home, overwhelmed me, if possible, with still greater consternation. His accent was precise and emphatic; his tread on the stairs, as he ascended, sounded heavily; and when he entered the room, his face was pale, and his dark eyes vividly fierce.

CHAPTER IV.

"Is Mrs Purcel here?" said he, as he approached towards the table on which lay the book I had been reading when she came in. His tone was arrogant, and I could not brook the menace of the aspect with which it was delivered.

"Is she?" was all the answer I gave him; at the same moment I walked towards the fire, and stood on the hearth-rug, eyeing him, I must however say, with feelings more defensive and compassionate than those with which he appeared to be animated.

Somewhat surprised by the manner with which I regarded him, he paused, and looked around much perplexed.

"General Purcel," said I, faintly, "I am at no loss to discover the cause of this singular visit. My devotion to your daughter is not acceptable to her mother, nor to you: I think you cannot be offended if I enquire the cause on your part."

"On mine there is none," he replied, in a calmer voice; "but Mrs Purcel, who has always been a woman of uncontrollable caprice, has fallen into frenzy on the subject; and though I am well aware Maria can hardly hope for a more advantageous match, yet her mother is so vehemently opposed to your attachment, which we have both long remarked, that she will listen to no argument on the subject. She insisted to-night in such a

manner I should forbid you my house, that I almost suspect she has herself"——

He hesitated, and then after a moment's pause added ;—" But it is impossible that the interest you appear to feel for Maria can be a disguise to conceal"——

He paused again, and I replied, " General Purcel, I will not affect to misunderstand you ; but I am a man of honour, and a word may appease all suspicions. Will you give me Maria ? "

" It must then be without her mother's consent. "

" With yours I shall be satisfied, if Maria will. "

" It must then be managed secretly ; for Mrs Purcel, when once her feelings or her passions are engaged, though in her milder moments seemingly of a far different order of temper, is deaf to reason, and blind to danger ; nothing can repress her vehemence nor rule her wilfulness ; she either loves or hates you ; whichever is the source of her opposition, is equally beyond reason. "

" But, " said I, " that can be only while the feeling lasts. "

" Till it is gratified, " was his solemn and emphatic reply.

" Then, if to expect any mitigation of her opposition be so hopeless, and you are willing, may I presume to ask the hand of Maria ? "

" You have her heart, I think, and you have my consent ; but be wary, and let me be no more seen in it than is absolutely necessary ; " and he smiled, as he added, " such things will happen in the best regulated families. "

At that moment I heard a rustling on the landing-place, and expected to see Mrs Purcel burst into the room ; but she descended in the dark, and escaped from the house.

It is not required of me to mention what farther passed with the general, and I dare no longer trust my pen with any reflections. Facts are all I may now venture to record. The fetters of perdition were riveted ; the spells that were to burst in horror had taken effect—the victims were now fastened to the stake—but they had no sense of their condition ; they were happy in a flowery, an arborous Sicilian garden : the volcano was below, and the giant earthquake only asleep.

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE remarked in my own experience two kinds of sonambular perception—the one ordinary and common to all sorts of minds, but the other is strange, inscrutable, and prophetic, of rare occurrence even among those who are saddened with the melancholy endowment. The same thing has, I imagine, been often observed before, and been distinguished by thoughtful men with the discriminative epithets of dreams and visions. The former, as I think, consist of the involuntary remembrance and association of impressions which have been made on the senses, and are but the mere metaphorical clothing of unregulated reflection; the latter are apocalyptical admonitions from heaven—and of this kind was the omen of my sleep in that fatal night.

I had a vision of an ancient church: banners and carved stalls, and stately tombs, and long avenues of columns, stained with the many-coloured dim religious light of painted windows, were around me. I stood before the altar, with Maria as my bride; her father was there, and the priest was reading the service. I had the ring ready, when suddenly, in the place of Maria, I beheld her mother; still the ceremony proceeded as if there had been no change, but when the visionary bride raised her hand to receive the ring, the beauty of it became dust, and she offered but the cany fingers of a skeleton.

Although fate was in the revelation and in the tumultuous feelings with which I awoke, I yet soon reasoned myself into a calm interpretation of the omen.

The unequivocal affection Mrs Purcell had shown for me, explained the source of the imagining which brought her to mar the marriage, and the vision then appeared but the drowsy reminiscence of the scenes of the evening. Still, however, that mouldering mummy hand was ever before me, suggesting the dread of some hideous combination of unmixable and forbidden things. Weddings and funerals mingled together, and banquets at which the dead sat in their cerements.

Nevertheless, in the morning I sent for Sydenham; and having informed him of what had passed, he undertook to make the

necessary arrangements for the completion of my happiness—happiness ! and in the evening I wrote to General Oglethorpe, to tell him of my choice. By this time he was become very aged and infirm : he resided constantly at Bath, and seldom went abroad ; but we frequently corresponded ; and, although I had not before told him of my attachment to Maria Purcel, he was yet aware of my intention to marry, and that I had selected my partner.

CHAPTER VI.

It was not thought necessary that the preparations for the wedding should be of any particular splendour ; on the contrary, it was determined that, as soon as the ceremony was over, we should proceed on a tour to the Highlands of Scotland. All that was deemed requisite Sydenham undertook to arrange ; and in consequence of the impassioned opposition of Mrs Purcel, it was agreed that the General, on the pretext of showing Maria the curiosities of the Tower, should bring her to a church in the city, where the service might be performed, without the hazard of interruption from her mother ; for some extraordinary violence, in the event of discovery, was apprehended from her.

It was necessary, however, that proper settlements should be prepared in the mean time ; and, accordingly, as the lawyers required three days to make up the writings, that interval was allowed to them ; but they obtained more than a week by an event signal and appalling.

Instead of receiving an answer from General Oglethorpe by return of the post, he came himself from Bath, and suddenly entered my room while Sydenham was with me. I rose to receive him with feelings of the liveliest delight. To see him in town, on the occasion, was far more than I had ventured to expect, considering his infirmities and the length of the journey. But in an instant the joy was extinguished ; for, on offering me his hand, he uttered a wild and feeble shriek, and sunk at my feet in speechless and powerless paralysis.

I will not dwell on the scene. In the course of the same day he died. Thus, as it appeared, was the frightful vision which had so scared my sleep awfully realized, and the preparations for a wedding turned indeed into those for a funeral.

But though the event was in itself so well calculated to fill my bosom with solemnity and sorrow, it had yet a far other effect. I was, as it were, lightened, and lifted out of my accustomed superstitious apprehensions, and I felt eager and impatient of any occurrence which impeded the consummation of my fate.

Before the excellent old man was committed to the earth, Sydenham procured the license; and the day of the entombment was appointed for the joyous celebration of my wedding.

I shrink and I shudder when I now recall to mind the infatuation that made me join things which nature has so impressively placed asunder. Sydenham urged me to pause—to sacrifice to decorum; but his argument and eloquence were unavailing. General Purcel, too, entreated me to let but a week pass over. I was, however, obstinate; and he brought me letters from Maria, all asking delay; but I regarded them as the suggestions of his own weakness.

The morning and the hour being, in consequence of my inflexible determination, so fixed, and General Purcel having agreed to attend the funeral, it was resolved that the marriage ceremony, instead of taking place as previously arranged, should be performed in Westminster-Abbey, where the remains of my uncle were to be laid, and immediately after the burial.

That such an unnatural mixture of irreconcilable rites should ever have been consented to by a creature so full of tenderness and of such unparalleled delicacy as Maria, is not the least wonder in our dismal story; but she was fastened to the same chain by which I was drawn on. It was thought by us that the horrible stratagem of joining the funeral and the wedding together, would never be suspected by Mrs Purcel.

CHAPTER VII.

THE funeral procession moved towards the Abbey as the clock was striking seven:—the service was read, and the burial completed. The friends of my uncle who had come to pay the last tribute of their regard had retired, and General Purcel and myself also left the church; but instead of going back to the coach which had brought us, we walked into the cloisters.

Sydenham was not at the funeral. Maria, with a young friend and her maid, were under his charge in a house in Abingdon Street; and as soon as the hearse and the remains of the pageantry left the Abbey, they entered the church by Poets' Corner.

Except the clergyman, and the servants of the cathedral, there were no spectators. By some inexplicable influence, however, my valet, of his own accord, remained at the door to prevent interruption, and the ceremony proceeded; but just in the moment when I was in the act of putting on the ring, he came rushing towards us with such an expression of consternation in his countenance, that I was startled and alarmed before he had power to tell his fear. In the same moment Maria screamed, for her mother entered the church, pale, dishevelled, and frantic, crying, "I forbid the bans—brother and sister—brother and sister!" I heard no more:—the vast edifice reeled, as it were, around me, and the pillars and monuments seemed as if they were tumbling upon my head; and then there is a hiatus in my remembrance—a chasm in my life.

When I recovered from the shock, under which I had fallen senseless on the pavement, I found myself at home in my own chamber, and Sydenham standing mournfully at my bedside. I asked no questions, but pressed his hand.

"The carriage," said he, is at the door, "and I will go with you."

I made no answer, but rose—for I had not been undressed—and followed him to the carriage.

Ten years have passed since that dreadful morning, and I have never opened my lips to enquire the issues of the event; but

one day, about two years ago, in visiting the English cemetery at Lisbon, I saw on a marble slab, which the weather or accident had already partly defaced, the epitaph of Maria. The remainder of my own story is but a tissue of aimless and objectless wanderings and moody meditations, under the anguish of the inherited curse.

But all will soon be over:—a tedious hectic that has long been consuming me, reluctantly and slowly, hath at last, within these few days, so augmented its fires, that I am conscious, from a sentiment within, I cannot survive another month; I have, indeed, had my warning. Twice hath a sound like the voice of my sister startled my unrefreshing sleep: when it rouses me for the third time, then I shall awake to die.

END OF THE OMEN.

ILLUSTRATIONS, ANECDOTES,

AND

CRITICAL REMARKS.

ILLUSTRATIONS, &c.

“THE ‘Annals of the Parish’ and ‘The Provost’ have been generally received as novels, and I think, in consequence, they have both suffered, for neither of them have, unquestionably, a plot. My own notion was to exhibit a kind of local theoretical history, by examples, the truth of which would at once be acknowledged. But as novels they are regarded, and I must myself as such now consider them; but still something is due to the author’s intention, for, notwithstanding the alleged liveliness of some of the sketches, as stories they are greatly deficient.

“In the composition of ‘The Provost’ I followed the same rule of art which seemed to me so proper in the ‘Annals of the Parish,’ namely, to bring impressions on the memory harmoniously together; indeed, I have adhered to the principle in all my subsequent compositions, and sometimes I fancy that the propriety of doing so may be justified by nature. I think no ingenuity can make an entirely new thing. Man can only combine the old together; join legs and arms and wings as he may, only the forms of previously created things can be imitated. The whole figure may be *outré*, and unlike any thing in the heavens or the earth, or the waters under the earth; but the imitations of the human hand in the details will ever be evident.

“This restriction, which we inherit with the limitation of our nature, makes me dislike all those kind of monsters and chimeras dire, such as Fuseli the painter in his dreams attempted to imagine, and to prefer to them the simple phenomena of things that are; and yet I believe that I am not insensible to the merit of those kind of contrivances that are commonly called inventions. Perhaps I suffer in the opinion of the ingenious in consequence; but before their adjudication, the soundness of my maxim should be examined, for I carry my notion so far as even to deduce from it

an argument, to myself not a weak one, demonstrative of revelation. The utter incapability of man, I say, to invent or create any thing entirely new, is a proof that the existence of God must have been revealed, because the idea of Him is unlike any conception which our mere natural faculties can conceive. This is not the place, however, to be more particular; but I can give no higher proof of the sincerity with which I strive in 'mine art' to combine, in the most natural manner, only those things which actually present themselves to the senses. In my youth I wrote a poem called the 'Legend of St Anthony,' which I undertook with the intention of depicting comical phantasms; but I had not proceeded far till I was induced to change my mind, by observing that my most extravagant fancies were only things of curious patchwork; and that the same defect might be discerned in all those things in which the 'creative' power of genius was said to be more indisputable. Hence it is that I could not since see ought in the Caliban of Shakspeare but an idiot, a Betty Foy's son, though his mother was the 'damned witch Sycorax.' That I did at one time fancy that inventions were better than things of nature, is admitted, and in the 'Mermaid' I have attempted to embody one of this poetical progeny; but subsequent observation has convinced me that only in nature excellence is to be found, and that the merit of my creation of Marina is only in her being more than ordinarily endowed with gentle human feelings. I therefore give up all pretension to belonging to that class who deal in the wild and wonderful; my wish is to be estimated by the truth of whatever I try to represent.

"But independent of the rule I prescribed to myself in the composition of 'The Provost,' I, very simply perhaps, acknowledge, that to myself it has always appeared superior to the 'Annals of the Parish,' to which work it was written as a companion; and I shall quote from my Autobiography two anecdotes which have probably contributed to produce this effect:—

"'The friend to whom it was dedicated, lent it to Mr Canning, who read it during a dull debate—no uncommon thing in the House of Commons. Mr Canning spoke of it afterwards always with commendation.

"'But besides exhibiting a tolerably correct picture of a Scottish burgh, I had in view, while writing it, a gentleman who, when

I was a boy at school, had the chief management of the corporation in my native town. He was unblemished in reputation, with considerable talent for his sphere, and, it was alleged, possessed that pawkie art, in which the hero is delineated to have excelled. I left the place when about ten years old, but his peculiarities had even then struck me; and, when I determined on composing a companion to the "Annals of the Parish," he seemed to have been made for me. I believed he was dead, and had no scruple about choosing him for my model.

" 'Long after the publication, and when I had returned from my first voyage to Canada, I went, accompanied by my mother and sister, to Irvine; and in passing through Ayrshire, it was proposed to give me the freedom of the burgh, for which purpose the town-council invited me to the clerk's chamber.

" 'As we had a long journey to perform in the course of that day, I stepped out of the post-chaise at the door of the tolbooth, to wait on the magistrates, when, to my astonishment, I beheld my old friend alive, then a very venerable man, sitting in the chair. The sight upon me for a moment was as an apparition; but I was recalled to myself by the manner in which he delivered the diploma, with an address—Provost Pawkie himself could never have said any thing half so good.

" 'His speech partook of his character, and evinced a degree of good sense, of tact, and taste, though delivered in the Scottish dialect, quite extraordinary. Instead of speaking the sort of balderdash common on such occasions, he passed over every thing which related to myself, conceiving, as I suppose, that the honour of bestowing on me a burgess ticket was a sufficient recognition of my supposed deservings; but he paid a well-expressed compliment to the character of my father and mother, telling how much they were held in esteem by their townsfolk, and concluded with saying, that not the least proof of their merits was in bringing up their children to be deemed worthy of a public testimony of respect.' "

The following acute and searching remarks on "THE PROVOST," are taken from Vol. XXXIX. of the Edinburgh Review.

"The author's next work is 'The Provost,' which is decidedly better than the 'Legatees,' and on a level nearly with the 'Annals

of the Parish.' There is no inconsiderable resemblance, indeed, it appears to us, in the character of the two biographers; for if we substitute the love of jobbing and little management, which is inseparable from the situation of a magistrate in one of our little burghs, for the zeal for Presbyterian discipline which used to attach to our orthodox clergy, and make a proper allowance for the opposite effects of their respective occupations, we shall find a good deal of their remaining peculiarities common to both those authors—the same kindness of nature with the same tranquillity of temper—and the same practical sagacity with a similar deficiency of large views or ingenious speculations. The provost, to be sure, is a more worldly person than the pastor, and makes no scruple about using indirect methods to obtain his ends, from which the simplicity of the other would have recoiled; but his ends are not, on the whole, unjust or dishonest; and his good-nature and acute simplicity, with the burghal authority of his tone, would almost incline us to conclude that he was somehow related to the celebrated Bailie Nicol Jarvie of the Saltmarket. The style of his narrative is exceedingly meritorious; for while it is pitched on the selfsame key of picturesque homeliness and deliberate method with that of the parish annalist, it is curiously distinguished from it by a sensible inferiority in literature, and an agreeable intermixture of *malapropos*, and other figures of rhetoric befitting the composition of a loyal chief magistrate. By far the most remarkable and edifying thing, however, in this volume, is the discovery which the worthy provost is represented as having gradually made, of the necessity of consulting public opinion in his later transactions, and the impossibility of managing public affairs, in the present times, with the same barefaced assertion, and brave abuse of authority, which had been submitted to by a less instructed generation. As we cannot but suspect that this great truth is not yet sufficiently familiar with all in authority among us, and as there is something extremely engaging in the provost's confession of his slow and reluctant conversion, and in the honest simplicity with which he avows his adherence to the principles of the old school of corruption, though convinced that the manner of advancing them must now be changed, we are tempted to extract a part of his lucubrations on this interesting subject. After noticing the death of old Bailie M'Lucre, he takes occasion to observe—

'For now that he is dead and gone,' &c.—P. 68.

"Accordingly, afterwards when a corps of volunteers was raised in his burgh, he observes—

'I kept myself aloof from all handling,' &c.—P. 83.

"Upon occasion of his third and last promotion to the provostry, he thus records his own final conversion—

'When I returned home to my own house,' &c.—P. 124.

"Trusting that these lessons from a person of such prudence, experience, and loyalty, will not be lost on his successors, we shall now indulge ourselves by quoting a few specimens of what will generally be regarded as his more interesting style; and, with our usual predilection for the tragic vein, shall begin with the following very touching account of the execution of a fair young woman for the murder of her new-born infant.

'The heinousness of the crime can,' &c.—P. 26.

"This is longer than we had expected; and therefore, omitting all the stories of his wiles and jocosities, we shall take our leave of the provost with his very pathetic and picturesque description of the catastrophe of the Windy Yule, which we think would not discredit the pen of the great novelist himself.

'In the morning the weather was blasty,' &c.—P. 10.

Remarks on "THE STEAM-BOAT."

The following are Mr Galt's own anecdotal remarks on "The Steam-Boat." The stories of which it is made up are very unequal; but "The Wearyful Woman"—"Deucalion of Kentucky"—"Spitzbergen"—and "The Buried Alive," are not easily forgotten.

"I was surely born a Radical, and owe my Tory predilections entirely to a prankful elf, who, delighting in the ridiculous, has in high times and holidays, so serious to those who think themselves the great of the earth, ever turned towards me the comic aspect of things. This feeling of the 'te'en-awa' I have often experienced; indeed I may say on every occasion when I ought to have been most debonair, Euphrosyne, as she is called in heaven according to Milton,

‘And by men heart-easing Mirth,’

has stood laughing at my elbow in her sleeve; on none, however, did she ever exceed a titter, save at the gorgeous coronation of George IV., and in witnessing the pageantries of his most gracious and ever memorable visit to Scotland.

“‘The Steam-Boat’ and ‘The Gathering of the West,’ originally published in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, contain some taste of her quality; but at the time when they were written a more powerful spirit was in predominance, that restrained the ready levity of my pen. The sister, however, of Mephistophiles was not easily restrained from giving way to bursts of the most profane laughter, though, unlike his sneers, they were very good-natured.

“Notwithstanding the deference for magnates and magnificence under which these works were written, the original sin may be detected here and there peeping out, insomuch that those who consider Toryism as consisting of the enjoyment of at least pensions, must be dreadfully shocked to think even a moderate politician of any sort could be so far left to himself as to speak so irreverently of things which concerned the affairs of empires and burgh towns.

“In ‘The Steam-Boat’ I was anxious to give such an account of the coronation as I thought an abortive bailie likely to do, and which might not be offensive to those who enjoyed the show; but somehow so many ludicrous objects fascinated my attention that it was very difficult to be serious. In consequence, I was obliged to have recourse to an old account of the Presbyterian coronation of ‘his sacred Majesty’ King Charles II. at Perth, to avoid being, as the Yankees say, too special. The spectacle of the Duke of Wellington as Constable of England in the exhibition of the champion, was much too high for me; besides, I thought it would have been better done at Astley’s. Saving that incident, however, the rest of the exhibition was only titillating. But it could no longer be denied that the days of pageants were over; though the fools in the nation may not have decreased, as the population has been prodigiously augmented. I regard them as very foolish who think that pageants which have become obsolete, can ever be again rendered impressive.

“In one respect the tomfoolery of the coronation of George IV. was not, however, altogether ‘a vain show’ in my eyes, and, when not tickled with the kything of the ridiculous, I had occasional moments of sedate reflection which assumed the gravity of philosophy. It seemed to me that such things now did not harmonize with our natural national character, and that although the ceremony in its essence was sacred in the highest degree, yet there were few present who *felt* that it was so. The instant that the performance was finished, the spectators all rose and became as fluent in their talk as the scattering audience after a stage-play; no vestige of solemnity remaining, if during the exhibition they experienced any. The whole affair seemed bottomed in imitation of something contrary to the taste of the people, and I believe myself not wrong in thinking, that there was much affectation in the masques put on for the occasion around me.

“Some years before, soon after the restoration of Louis XVIII., I was present in the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris, when the grand mass was celebrated for the royal victims of the Revolution; and although the occasion was funereal and sombre, as compared with a coronation, it seemed to afford a glimpse of the idiomatic difference, as it may be called, of the English and French character. As a mere pageant, there was no comparison between the Parisian church and Westminster Hall. In conception, the latter was infinitely finer and more gorgeous. The *Henriade* compared with the *Paradise Lost*, does not afford a more striking contrast in comparison; and yet the French spectacle was transcendently more impressive, chiefly, I think, to the reverential awe with which in the church the congregation dispersed. Without, it was much the same with the multitude as in London; but within, the order was sublime.

“If the coronation, however, of George IV. was the dirge of the feudal system, no heirs or legatees, immediately after any burial, could be more voracious than the scene which ensued at the termination of the banquet. If any thing were calculated to inspire laughable contempt for the melodrama of earthly grandeur, it was the hurly-burly in Westminster Hall subsequent to the King’s departure. I can neither repress my derision at the commotion, nor conceive why it was permitted, though ‘the swinish multitude’ were in court dresses. But there is a stronger infec-

tion in folly than in wisdom, and, though I despised the pastime, I could not resist joining in the game. In the plunder of the tables I got hold of a golden Britannia as big as a doll, with which I made proud a bishop's lady, as I understood, and gave to another 'gorgeous dame' of high degree, a really beautiful basket of crystal, and bestowed gilded vessels on longing ladies. But what added to the delight was the discovery that all the magnificence was as artificial as courtesies! The goblets and imagery, the plates and epergnes, at the coronation festival of the greatest monarch on the earth, were gilded wood and pewter trenchers! This, however, was wise, and showed the improved intelligence, *alias* the political economy of the age; but wherefore cheat the eye? At the time, the coronation afforded me inconceivable pleasure, for I could only see things, bating the occasion, worthy to provoke heart-easing laughter; the remembrance, however, like many other sweets, sours in the rumination. It did more to lessen my respect for the tricks of state than any thing I ever witnessed.

"If the coronation disclosed the folly that sits in high places, the gathering to see the king in Edinburgh fully matched it, by showing the depths of absurdity to which the mass will descend. Certainly the sight was gay and jocund; but it was a nation in its 'Sunday clothes.' What kings should seek to see, is not how their subjects can appear when put to a stress, but how they daily do when in fabrication of those things which are the sinews and the muscles of power. Had George the Fourth's performance of Crispianus in the Scottish metropolis been a truly royal avatar, as it was given out to be, he would at least have given one day to the inspection of the hospitals, of the receptacles of the houseless, and of the haunts and habitations of the miserable and forlorn. I have an utter loathing of royal visitations to the bright side of things, and for many a year have seen but in them that flattering which too many think it is the business of kings to receive. The Edinburgh citizens cuckoo about George the Fourth calling them gentlemen, and their town a city of palaces, as if he had not read enough of other places to know the truth, and thought but of out-doing them in cajolery.

"To speak thus of that affair may be not very prudent, nor will I maintain that disease has not given a morbid bias to my ideas of

many things, now that I am constrained to sequestration and musing; but I think rulers were raised to their superiority for other purposes than to look out on sunny gardens. They must visit the charnel-house—lift the lid, and learn what is man, as they shudder at the carcass; or, in other words, make themselves acquainted with the inevitable lot of humanity, which so many around them—mistaken virtue!—hide from their knowledge, as if for a moment it could be supposed that the interests of the high can have any other nutrition than the prosperity of the low.

“‘The Steam-boat,’ and ‘The Gathering of the West,’ must therefore be considered, in what relates to the coronation and the royal visit, as mere occasional *jeu-d’esprits*. But I ought not to conclude this chapter without mentioning an incident from which I derived entire pleasure, and I do think that no unpremeditated occurrence was ever so truly sublime. It was the exhibition in the High Street of Edinburgh, on the Sabbath when the king went in state to St Giles’s. A countless multitude crowded the pavement; but the royal cortège was allowed to pass along in silence, the spectators only uncovering respectfully as it passed.

“Nothing could have given me a higher notion of the good sense of my countrymen. This occurrence rendered me unable to speak. I have seen the sultan of Turkey, with all his pomp, proceed at the Biram to the mosque—the procession of the host in Catholic capitals—the apocalypse of the images of saints on great festivals—executions by the guillotine in Paris—and the coronation of George IV.; but I had never imagined that any manifestation of simple human feeling could reach to such solemnity; nor can I better describe the nature of my own sentiments with respect to grandeur than by this statement. Many instances may be traced in my different literary essays.”

Before setting before the reader some collected anecdotes and remarks concerning “The Omen,” which is a tale *sui generis*, and quite apart from the other works in this collection—all of which appertain to Scottish life and character—perhaps I may be permitted to make the following short extract from an essay on the

genius of Galt, which I contributed to the "Edinburgh Literary Gazette" in 1829:—

"Sir Walter Scott and Mr Galt may be likened to the Don Quixote and Sancho of novel writers, with some show of aptitude; the range of the one's imagination being wider and more varied, while that of the other, although comparatively circumscribed, is essentially true to nature. Both have occasionally sailed on another tact; but 'The Monastery' is as inferior to 'Guy Mannering' as 'The Earthquake' is to 'The Annals.' Like most authors, Mr Galt has his peculiar walk and forté; and without doubt these lie amid the scenes and manners of actual life, especially in its middle or lower grades—his aristocratic pictures sometimes more resembling lay figures than men and women. But in the delineations of the denizens of the shop or the counting-house, of the manse or the mill, of the urban villa or the rural cottage, he lives, and moves, and has his being, as a man of genius; and, forsaking them, he comparatively fails. Like the giant Antæus, he never shows himself in full vigour but when he is touching his mother earth. For strength of graphic painting, nothing can excel his Micah Balwhidder, his Provost Pawkie, his Andrew Wylie, his Wattie the simpleton, his Leddy Grippy, his Malachi Mailings, or his Tansy the schoolmaster; while put in contrast with these, his imaginative and historical characters, such as Anniple of Dunnipace, Ringhan Gilhaize, or Adonijah the Jew, are as drawings in water-colours to finished portraits in oils."

Review of THE OMEN by Sir Walter Scott, from Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. XX., July 1826, and reprinted in Miscellaneous Prose Works, Vol. XVIII., p. 333.

"The Muse of Fiction has of late considerably extended her walk; and it will probably be admitted, that she has lent her counsel to authors of greater powers, and more extended information, than those who detailed the uninteresting Memoirs of Jenny and Jemmy Jessamy, and the like tiresome persons. The grave humour of Fielding—the broad comedy of Smollett—the laboured pathos of Richardson—the sentiment of Mackenzie and Sterne—are of course excluded from this comparison. But even these distinguished authors seem to have limited the subjects of fictitious composition to imaginary incidents in private life, and to

displaying the influence of the ordinary passions of mankind—the world in which they and their readers lived, could show parallel instances of the adventures narrated, and characters to match in some degree with the personages introduced. But the modern novelists, compelled, perhaps, by the success of their predecessors, to abandon a field where the harvest was exhausted, have, many of them, chosen elsewhere subjects of a different description. We have now novels which may take the old dramatic term of *Chronicles*; bringing real and often exalted persons on the stage; adorning historical events with such ornaments as their imagination can suggest; introducing fictitious characters among such as are real, and assigning to those which are historical, qualities, speeches, and actions, which exist only in the writer's fancy. These historical novels may operate advantageously on the mind of two classes of readers; first, upon those whose attention to history is awakened by the fictitious narrative, and whom curiosity stimulates to study, for the purpose of winnowing the wheat from the chaff, the true from the fabulous. Secondly, those who are too idle to read, save for the purpose of amusement, may in these works acquire some acquaintance with history, which, however inaccurate, is better than none. If there is a third class, whose delight in history is liable to be lessened by becoming habituated to the fairy-land of fiction, it must be confessed, that for them the historical romance or novel runs risk of doing much harm. But the readers liable to suffer by this perversion, are supposed to be but few in number, or, indeed, to merge almost entirely in the second class, since the difference is but nominal betwixt those who read novels, because they dislike history—and those who dislike history, because they read novels.

“It is not, however, of historical novels that we are now about to speak, but of another species of these productions which has become popular in the present day, and of which the interest turns less upon the incidents themselves, than upon the peculiar turn of mind of the principal personage who is active or passive under them, and which character is not, like Mackenzie's ‘*Man of Feeling*,’ a picture improved from nature, but has something in it so exaggerated, as to approach the verge of the grotesque or unnatural. In such works, it is the character of the individual, not the events of the tale, which constitute the charm of the writing.

There is a strong resemblance betwixt the novel of character, and what was called, in the seventeenth century, plays of humour, when the interest consisted in observing how particular incidents worked upon those of the dramatis personæ, to whom was assigned a natural or acquired peculiarity of sentiment and taste, which made them consider matters under a different light from that in which they appeared to mankind in general. The Morose of Ben Jonson, whose passion it is to have every thing silent around him, the Volpone, and almost all the principal characters of that able and learned dramatist, are influenced by some overmastering humour, which, like the supposed influence of the planet under which he was born, sways and biasses the individual, and makes him unlike to the rest of his species, even in the events most common to humanity.

“Mr Godwin has been one of the masters in the novel of character—a title which we rather choose than that of humour, which has now acquired an almost exclusive comic meaning. The morbid sensibility of Fleetwood, and the restless, speculating curiosity of Caleb Williams, are instances of his talent in that department. There is, perhaps, little general sympathy with the overstrained delicacies of Fleetwood, who, like Falkland in the *School for Scandal*, is too extravagant in his peculiarities to deserve the reader’s pity. On the other hand, few there are who do not enter into and understand the workings of the mind of Caleb Williams, where the demon of curiosity, finding a youth of an active and speculative disposition, without guide to advise, or business to occupy him, engages his thoughts and his time upon the task of prying into a mystery which no way concerned him, and which from the beginning he had a well-founded conviction might prove fatal to him should he ever penetrate it. The chivalrous frenzy of Falkland, in the same piece, though perhaps awkwardly united with the character of an assassin, that love of fame to which he sacrifices honour and virtue, is another instance of a *humour*, or turn of mind, which, like stained glass, colours with its own peculiar tinge every object beheld by the party.

“In the elegant little volume which forms the subject of this article, we find another example of the novel of character, and indisputably a good one. The theme which he has chosen as predominating in his hero’s mind, a youth of a gentle, melancholy,

abstracted disposition, is a superstition as connected with an anxious and feverish apprehension of futurity—a feeling which, though ridiculed at one time, reasoned down at another, and stubbornly denied upon all, has, in one shape or other, greater weight with most men than any is willing to admit of himself, or ready to believe in another.

“Men of the most different habits and characters in other respects, resemble each other in the practice of nursing in secret some pet superstition, the belief of which, though often painful to them, they cherish the more fondly in secret, that they dare not for shame avow it in public; so that many more people than the world in general is aware of, hold similar opinions with that of a distinguished sea-officer of our acquaintance, who, having expressed his general disbelief of all the legends of Davy Jones, Flying Dutchmen, and other mystic terrors of the deep, summed up his general infidelity on the subject with these qualifying words—‘One would not, to be sure, whistle in a gale of wind.’

“The reader will easily imagine that we do not allude to the superstition of the olden time, which believed in spectres, fairies, and other supernatural apparitions. These airy squadrons have been long routed, and are banished to the cottage and the nursery. But there exists more than one species of superstition entirely distinct from that which sees phantoms, a disease or weakness of the mind—not to be cured by Dr Alderson, or analysed by Dr Hibbert—amongst which is pre-eminent that which supposes our mind receives secret intimations of futurity by accidents which appear mysteriously indicative of coming events, by impulses to which the mind seems involuntarily subjected, and which seems less to arise from its own reflections, than to be stamped and impressed on the thoughts by the agency of some separate being;—this constitutes the peculiar superstition of the hero of the Omen. The events which he meets are all of a natural and ordinary character in themselves; it is the sensations of the augur by whom they are interpreted, which gives them an ominous character.

“This tendency to gaze beyond the curtain which divides us from futurity, has been the weakness of many distinguished names. Bonaparte secretly believed in the influence of his star—Byron had more than one point of superstitious faith—Sheridan had that horror of doing any thing on a Friday, which is yet common

among the vulgar ; and he took his late son Tom away from Dr Parr's school, because he had dreamed he had fallen from a tree and broken his neck. Other instances might be produced ; some are no doubt affected, because to entertain a strange and peculiar belief on particular subjects, looks like originality of thinking, or, at least, attracts attention, like the wearing a new and whimsical dress in order to engage public notice. But those whom we have named were too proud, and stood too high, to have recourse to such arts ; they are the genuine disciples, to a certain extent, of the mystic philosophy, which the author of the *Omen* thus describes.

“ ‘ Why are we so averse to confess to one another, how much we in secret acknowledge to ourselves, that we believe the mind to be endowed with other faculties of perception than those of the corporeal senses ? We deride with worldly laughter the fine enthusiasm of the conscious spirit that gives heed and credence to the metaphorical intimations of prophetic reverie, and we condemn as superstition, the faith which consults the omens and oracles of dreams ; and yet, who is it that has not in the inscrutable abysses of his own bosom an awful worshipper, bowing the head and covering the countenance, as the dark harbingers of destiny, like the mute and slow precursors of the hearse, marshal the advent of a coming woe ?

“ ‘ It may be that the soul never sleeps, and what we call dreams, are but the endeavours which it makes, during the trance of the senses, to reason by the ideas of things associated with the forms and qualities of those whereof it then thinks. Are not indeed the visions of our impressive dreams often but the metaphors with which the eloquence of the poet would invest the cares and anxieties of our waking circumstances and rational fears ? But still the spirit sometimes receives marvellous warnings : and have we not experienced an unaccountable persuasion, that something of good or of evil follows the visits of certain persons, who, when the thing comes to pass, are found to have had neither affinity with the circumstances, nor influence on the event ? The hand of the horologe indexes the movements of the planetary universe ; but where is the reciprocal enginery between them ?

“ ‘ These reflections, into which I am perhaps too prone to fall, partake somewhat of distemperance and disease ; but they are not

therefore the less deserving of solemn consideration. The hectical flush, the palsied hand, and the frenzy of delirium, are as valid, and as efficacious in nature, to the fulfilment of providential intents, as the glow of health, the masculine arm, and the sober inductions of philosophy. Nor is it wise, in considering the state and frame of man, to overlook how much the universal element of disease affects the evolutions of fortune. Madness often babbles truths which make wisdom wonder.'

"The facts by which this theory is illustrated are few and simple. The author is one of those whose 'sense of being is derived from the past;' who do not look forward to form splendid pictures of the future, but dote, with the constancy of infatuation, on those which exist in the gallery of memory. He does not form his conjectures of the future by comparing it with that which is present, but by auguries derived from events long past, and deeply engraved upon the tablets of recollection.

"These are of a solemn mystic air and tragic character. His infant years recall a vision of a splendid mansion, disturbed by signs of woe and violence; and the joyous remembrances of his childish play are interrupted by recollection of a wounded gentleman, and a lady distracted by sorrow. There are traces of a journey—the travellers, says the author,

"'Arrive at the curious portal of a turreted manorial edifice: I feel myself lifted from beside my companion, and fondly pressed to the bosom of a venerable matron, who is weeping in the dusky twilight of an ancient chamber, adorned with the portraits of warriors. A breach in my remembrance ensues; and then the same sad lady is seen reclining on a bed, feeble, pale, and wasted, while sorrowful damsels are whispering and walking softly around.'

"The author then finds himself residing by the sea-side, under charge of an old lady. Here he meets a solitary stranger, who resides in the neighbourhood, and notices the child with much and mixed emotion; but being apparently recognized by Mrs Ormond, he disappears from the neighbourhood; and Mrs Ormond, finding the boy retained deeper impressions concerning his infantine years than she thought desirable, sets out with the purpose of placing him at school. In their journey they meet a magnificent but deserted mansion; and the manner in which the author de-

scribes the reflections thus awakened, forms a good specimen of the style and tone of the whole work.

“ ‘ In seeking my way alone back to the vestibule, I happened to enter a large saloon, adorned with pictures and mirrors of a princely magnitude. Finding myself in error, I was on the point of retiring, when my eye caught a marble table, on which stood a French clock between two gilded Cupids. The supporters of the table were curiously carved into such chimerical forms as belong only to heraldry and romance.

“ ‘ As I looked around at the splendid furniture with wonder and curiosity, something in the ornaments of that gorgeous table arrested my attention, and made a chilly fear vibrate through my whole frame. I trembled as if a spectre of the past had been before me, claiming the renovation of an intimacy and communion which we had held together in some pre-Adamite state of being. Every object in that chamber I had assuredly seen in another time; but the reminiscence which the sight of them recalled fluttered my innocent imagination with fear.

“ ‘ A door, opposite to that by which I had entered, led to the foot of a painted marble staircase. I moved tremblingly towards it, filled with an unknown apprehension and awe. I could no longer doubt I was in the same house where, in infancy, I had witnessed such dismay and sorrow; but all was dim and vague; much of the record was faded, and its import could not be read. The talisman of memory was shattered, and but distorted lineaments could be seen of the solemn geni who, in that moment, rose at the summons of the charm, and showed me the distracted lady and the wounded gentleman, whose blood still stained the alabaster purity of the pavement on which I was again standing.’

“ ‘ He makes no stay at this mansion, but is placed at a private school, where he forms an acquaintance with Sydenham, the natural son of a person of high rank, and goes down to his father’s house with him to spend the holydays. Here occurs one of those touches of scenery and description, well drawn and not overcharged, which we consider as evincing the author’s taste as well as his powers.

“ ‘ The old magnificence of the castle, a rude and vast pile, interested me for the two first days.

“ ‘ It stands on the verge of a precipice, which overshadows a

smooth-flowing river. Masses of venerable trees surround it on the other three sides, from the midst of which huge towers, with their coronals of battlements, and clokes of ivy, look down upon the green and bowery villagery of the valley, with the dark aspect of necromancy, and the veteran scowl of obdurate renown. It is, indeed, a place full of poesy and romance. The mysterious stairs, and the long hazy galleries, are haunted by the ever-whispering spirits of echo and silence; and the portraits and tapestries of the chambers make chivalry come again.'

"Now, considering how much has been of late said about old castles, we think there is great merit indeed, in conveying, in a few and appropriate phrases, the poetical ideas connected with the subject.

"At B—— Castle he meets a Mr Oakdale, in whom he recognizes the stranger of the sea-coast, and, considering it as certain that he must be connected with the mysteries of his own fate, he forms, together with his young companion, a scheme to penetrate into the secret. This is disconcerted by the duke, Sydenham's father, who imparts to his son information to be carefully concealed from the party principally concerned. The effect on their boyish intimacy is natural and well described. Upon Sydenham's return from the interview with the duke—

" 'A spell was invoked upon his frankness; and while he appeared in no measure less attached, yea, even while he showed a deeper feeling of affection for me, (for I often caught him looking at me with pity, till his eyes overflowed,) it was but too evident that he stood in awe of my unhappy destiny, and beheld the spectre which ever followed me—the undivulged horror, of which my conscious spirit had only the dim knowledge, that dread and bode-ments sometimes so wonderfully and so inexplicably give.'

"The author is removed successively to Eton, and to Oxford; but (which seems rather improbable) although indulged in a large scale of expense, he receives no communication respecting his real fortune or rank in society. An *eciaircissement* on this point is prematurely forced forward, by one of those chances which govern human life. While he witnesses the play of Hamlet, the incidents of which sympathize with the gloomy forebodings of his own spirit, and with the recollections of his infancy, his eye suddenly falls on Mr Oakdale: and the emotions which that mysterious person

evinces, press upon him the conviction that his own history resembled that of Hamlet. 'Shakspeare,' he exclaimed to Sydenham, who, notwithstanding his reserve, was still his companion, 'has told me that my father was murdered!'

" 'Sydenham grew pale, and lay back in his chair in astonishment.

" 'Nay more,' cried I; 'he has told me that the crime was caused by my mother.'

" Sydenham trembled, and rose from his seat, exclaiming, 'Is this possible?'

" 'Yes, and you have known it for years; and that Mr Oakdale is the adulterous assassin?'

" This discovery brings forth an explanation, which is undertaken by his maternal uncle, as he proves to be, General Oglethorpe. The author proves to be the heir of two considerable estates, and of those mansions which had impressed their appearance so strongly on his infantine imagination. His father had been killed or desperately hurt by Mr Oakdale, who had fled; his guilty mother had gone into farther irregularities. The veteran exacted a promise that he would never inquire after his mother; and, after a visit to his maternal seat, and to the ancient residence of his father, the young man agrees to his uncle's proposal that he should go abroad for some years.

" 'Those who look to *freits*,' says the old Scottish proverb, with the sagacity which we boast as national, '*freits* (that is omens) will follow them.' The morbid sensibility of young Oglethorpe—for such we suppose is his name, though never distinctly mentioned—detects allusions to his misfortunes in incidents which he meets with on the road, and even in the fantastic rack of clouds which drive along the sky. The reasoning of a person who is disposed to read references to his own fate in what passes in heaven, or in earth around him, is poetically given in the following passage:—

" 'Surely it is the very error of our nature, a fantasy of human pride, to suppose that man can be wisely ruled by his reason. Are not all our sympathies and antipathies but the instructions of instinct—the guide which we receive direct, original, and uncorrupted from Heaven?

" 'It may be, that we cannot, like choughs and ravens, and the

other irrational and babbling oracles of change—being so removed by habit from the pristine condition of natural feeling—predict from our own immediate sensations, the coming of floods and of thunder-storms, nor scent, like the watch-dog, the smell of death, before the purple spot or the glittering eye have given sign of the fatal infection; but have we not an inward sense that is often gladdened and saddened by influences from futurity, as the strings of the harp are prophetic of the mood and aspect of to-morrow? Shakspeare has exquisitely described his belief in this philosophy:

“ The southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves
Foretells a tempest and a blust’ring day.”

And I believe myself to be possessed of the faculty whose power consists of this hereafter sort of discernment;—Sydenham used to call it my genius.’

“ The subject of our tale is detained at Hamburg, by an acquaintance formed with an English officer of rank, General Purcel, and his lady; but chiefly by the charms of their daughter Maria. The beauty and accomplishments of this young lady, and still more the delicacy of her health, and the apparent frail tenure on which she holds these gifts, are calculated to make a deep impression on the heart of the youthful visionary, whose temperament was as melancholy as his feelings were tender. Of course he becomes the lover of Maria, but experiences the strongest and most startling opposition on the part of Mrs Purcel; who, seeming on the one hand much, and even passionately attached to her daughter’s admirer, declares herself, on the other, vehemently opposed to the suit. She is prevented from giving the grounds of her objections by some of those interruptions which are usually employed in romances to prolong the embarrassments of the dramatis personæ, and which perhaps are not in the present case very artificially interposed. Considering, as it proves to be the case, that Mrs Purcel was the guilty mother of the hero of the tale, and thus witnessed the dreadful scene of her son making love to her daughter, it is impossible that she could have left to chance an explanation of such tremendous importance. So, however, it is; and General Purcel, conceiving the objections of his

wife to be founded on some frivolous aversion, or yet more capricious, and perhaps guilty, attachment to the lover of Maria, gives his consent to their private marriage. General Oglethorpe is written to for his approbation. Instead of answering the letter, the veteran comes to town, to explain, doubtless, the fearful mystery; but expires ere he can discharge the task. The private marriage is then resolved on, and is in the act of proceeding in the very church where the body of the deceased General Oglethorpe had been just interred.

“ ‘That such an unnatural mixture of irreconcilable rites should ever have been consented to by a creature so full of tenderness and of such unparalleled delicacy as Maria, is not the least wonder in our dismal story; but she was fastened to the same chain by which I was drawn on. It was thought by us that the horrible stratagem of joining the funeral and the wedding together would never be suspected by Mrs Purcel.’

“ ‘But Mrs Purcel had heard the intelligence. She bursts on the ceremony, and astounds them by the outcry, ‘Brother and sister—brother and sister!’—‘I heard no more,’ continues the ill-fated narrator; ‘the edifice reeled around me—and there is a hiatus in my remembrance—a chasm in my life.’ The melancholy tale concludes thus:—

“ ‘Ten years have passed since that dreadful morning, and I have never opened my lips to inquire the issues of the event; but one day, about two years ago, in visiting the English cemetery at Lisbon, I saw on a marble slab, which the weather or accident had already partly defaced, the epitaph of Maria. The remainder of my own story is but a tissue of aimless and objectless wanderings and moody meditations, under the anguish of the inherited curse. But all will soon be over:—a tedious hectic that has long been consuming me, reluctantly and slowly, hath at last, within these few days, so augmented its fires, that I am conscious, from a sentiment within, that I cannot survive another month; I have, indeed, had my warning. Twice hath a sound like the voice of my sister startled my unrefreshing sleep: when it rouses me for the third time, then I shall awake to die.’

“ ‘The objection readily occurs to this tale, that the events are improbable, and slightly tacked together; but in these respects authors demand, and must receive, some indulgence. It is not

perhaps possible, at the same time, to preserve consistency and probability, and attain the interest of novelty. The reader must make the same allowances for such deficiency, as are granted to the scenist, or decorator of the drama. We see the towers which are described as being so solid in their structure, tremble as they are advanced or withdrawn, and we know the massy and earth-fast rocks of the theatre are of no stronger material than painted pasteboard. But we grant to the dramatist that which must be granted, if we mean to allow ourselves the enjoyment of his art; and a similar convention must be made with the authors of fictitious narratives, and, forgiving the want of solidity in the story, the reader must be good-natured enough to look only at the beauty of the painting.

“It is perhaps a greater objection, that the nature of the interest and of the catastrophe is changed in the course of the narration. We are at first led to expect that the author had subjected the interest of his hero to that gloomy and inexorable deity, or principle, in whom the ancients believed, under the name of Destiny, or Fate, and that, like Orestes or Hamlet, he was to be the destined avenger of his father’s injuries, or of his mother’s guilt. Such was the persuasion of the victim himself, as expressed in several passages, some of which we have quoted. But in the course of the action, the point upon which our imagination had been fixed, at the expense of some art, is altogether departed from. No more mention is made of Mr Oakdale, and though a fatal influence continues to impel the destined sufferer into most horrible danger, yet it is of a kind different from that which the omens presaged, and which the hero himself, and the reader, on his account, was induced to expect. For example, he meets on his road to Harwich with the funeral of a man who had been murdered, much in the same circumstances as those which attended the death of his own father, and which, while they indicate a bloody catastrophe to the story, bear no reference to that which really attends it.

“But although these objections may be started, they affect in a slight degree the real merits of the work, which consist in the beauty of its language, and the truth of the descriptions introduced. Yet even these are kept in subordination to the main interest of the piece, which arises from the melancholy picture of an amiable

young man, who has received a superstitious bias, imposed by original temperament, as well as by the sorrowful events of his childhood.

“ In this point of view, it is of little consequence whether the presages on which his mind dwells concur with the event; for the author is not refuting the correctness of such auguries, but illustrating the character of one who believed in them.

“ The tendency to such belief is, we believe, common to most men. There are circumstances, and animals, and places, and sounds, which we are naturally led to connect with melancholy ideas, and thus far to consider as being of evil augury. Funerals, churchyards, the howling of dogs, the sounds of the passing bell, are all of a gloomy character, and calamitous, or at least unpleasing in themselves, must lead, we are apt to suppose, to consequences equally unpleasing. He would be a stout sceptic who would choose, like the hero of our tale, to tack his wedding to the conclusion of a funeral, or even to place the representation of a death's-head on a marriage ring; and yet the marriage might be a happy one in either case, were there not the risk that the evil omen might work its own accomplishment by its effect on the minds of the parties.

“ But besides the omens which arise out of natural associations, there are superstitions of this kind which we have from tradition, and which affect those who believe in them merely because others believed before. We have all the nurse has taught of presages by sparkles from the fire, and signs from accidental circumstances, which, however they have obtained the character originally, have been at least generally received as matters of ominous presage; and it is wonderful in how many, and how distant countries, the common sense, or rather the common nonsense, of mankind, has attached the same ideas of mishap to circumstances which appear to have little relation to it; and not less extraordinary to discover some ancient Roman superstition existing in some obscure village, and surprising the antiquary as much as when he has the good luck to detect an antique piece of sculpture or inscription on the crumbling walls of a decayed Scottish church.

“ Day-fatalism, which has been so much illustrated by the learned and credulous Aubrey, or that recurring coincidence which makes men connect their good and evil fortunes with particular days, months, and years, is another of the habits by which Super-

stition angles for her vassals. These fatalities, which seem to baffle calculation, resemble, in fact, what is commonly called a run of luck, or an extraordinary succession of good or evil, beyond hope or expectation. Such irregularities in the current of events, are necessary to prevent human beings from lifting the veil of futurity. If the ordinary chances of fortune were not occasionally deranged, or set aside by those unexpected caprices of her power, Demoivre and his pupils might approach nearly to the rank of prophets.

“ In a third species of presage, our own mind, as we have hinted, becomes our oracle, and either from the dreams of the night, or the recollections of the day, we feel impressed with the belief that good or evil is about to befall us. We are far from absolutely scorning this species of divination, since we are convinced that in sleep, or even in profound abstraction, the mind may arrive at conclusions which are just in themselves, without our being able to perceive the process of thought which produced them. The singular stories told about dreams corresponding to the future event, are usually instances and illustrations of our meaning. A gentleman, for instance, is sued for a ruinous debt, with the accumulation of interest since his father's time. He is persuaded the claim had been long settled ; but he cannot, after the utmost search, recover the document which should establish the payment. He was about to set out for the capital, in order to place himself at the mercy of his creditor, when, on the eve of his journey, he dreams a dream. His father, he thought, came to him and asked the cause of his melancholy, and of the preparations which he was making for his journey ; and as the appearance of the dead excites no surprise in a dream, the visionary told the phantom the cause of his distress, and mentioned his conviction that this ruinous debt had been already settled. ‘ You are right, my son,’ was the answer of the vision ; ‘ the money was paid by me in my lifetime. Go to such a person, formerly a practitioner of the law, now retired from business, and remind him that the papers are in his hands. If he has forgotten the circumstance of his having been employed by me on that occasion, for he was not my ordinary agent, say to him that he may remember it by the token that there was some trouble about procuring change for a double Portugal piece when I settled

my account with him.' The vision was correct in all points. The slumbering memory of the ex-attorney was roused by the recollection of the doubloon—the writings were recovered—and the dreamer freed from the prosecution brought against him.

“This remarkable story we have every reason to believe accurate matter of fact, at least in its general bearings. Now, are we to suppose that the course of nature was interrupted, and that, to save a southland laird from a patrimonial injury, a supernatural warning was deigned, which the fate of empires has not drawn forth? This we find hard to credit. Or are we, on the other hand, to believe, that such coincidences between dreams and the events which they presage, arise from mere accident, and that a vision so distinct, and a result which afforded it so much corroboration, were merely the effect of circumstances, and happened by mere chance, just as two dice happen accidentally to cast up doublets? This is indeed possible, but we do not think it entirely philosophical. But our idea is different from both the alternative solutions which we have mentioned. Every one is sensible, that among the stuff which dreams are made of, we can recognise broken and disjointed remnants of forgotten realities which dwell imperfectly on the memory. We are of opinion, therefore, that, in this and similar cases, the sleeping imagination is actually weaving its web out of the broken realities of actual facts. The mind, at some early period, had been, according to the story, impressed with a strong belief that the debt had actually been paid, which belief must have arisen from some early convictions on the subject, of which the groundwork was decayed. But in the course of the watches of the night, fancy, in her own time and manner, dresses up the faded materials of early recollection. The idea of the father once introduced, naturally recalls to memory what the dreamer, at some forgotten period, had actually heard from his parent; and by this clue he arrives at the truth of a fact, as he might have done at the result of a calculation, though without comprehending the mode by which he arrived at the truth.

“The subject, if prosecuted, would lead very far, and farther, perhaps, than is warranted by the subject of these remarks. It is possible, however, we may one day return to it.”

The story which Sir Walter has here given as an illustration of forewarning from a dream, he afterwards detailed more at length in the republication of the *Waverley Novels*, (Vol. V. p. 132.) It has also been commented upon by Dr Abercrombie in his *Essay on the Intellectual Powers*, where some other curious illustrations are added.

Mr Galt has himself, in alluding to the time at which the "Omen" was written, and the circumstances which probably prompted his mind to the selection of such a subject, given us also a few more anecdotal remarks. The circumstances, alluded to in reference to the Canada Company, will be found explained in the preliminary memoir.

"Joking apart, however, the period between my return from America, until the vindication of the commissioners was established, proved exceedingly irksome; for although the commissioners knew that they had conscientiously executed their trust, we could not disguise from ourselves that, as we had enjoyed a discretionary freedom of opinion, a door was thereby opened by which cavil might enter and commit her nuisances with impunity.

"To apply to any serious course of study while the eclipse was in travel, it is needless to say was impossible. I never spent an equal space of life so idly; for although my time was occupied with many quests, which I thought might be useful if the Company became ultimately established, I could not divest myself of anxiety. My only confidence was in the determination of the court of directors to let the commissioners fight their own battle. This I think was chiefly owing, as I have said, to the governor, Mr Charles Bosanquet, and gave me a very high opinion of his tact and sagacity. He saw at once the consequences which would ensue if the Company took any part in the question, and accordingly recommended the award to be accepted as if it had not been controverted. I have no doubt that by this straight-forward decision he surprised and got the weather-gage in a dispute in which the government, by listening to the representations of the clergy, came shockingly off by the lee. I conceive, by having suggested and carried into effect this most judicious manœuvre, he did the Canada Company 'some service,' and now, that their stock is the most flourishing in London, it should be remembered; but gratitude is not an obligation of their charter.

“However, to proceed; while matters were in abeyance during the commissioners’ controversy, although my mind was in no very comfortable state, I wrote the tale of the ‘Omen,’ a continuation, as it may be called, of a former attempt to embody presentiments and feelings in situations not uncommon; for it has always appeared to me, that the more mysterious the sentiments are to which one desires to give

‘A local habitation and a name,

the more simple and ordinary should the vehicle be in which they are to be conveyed. The state coach is not employed to bring the crown from the Tower; an unobserved hackney does as well, or rather, I should say, better.

“Perhaps I may here properly introduce an instance of that peculiar local memory to which I have alluded, and in which I think myself in some measure remarkable. Among other properties which Mr Ellice inherited in the State of New York, was one at Little Falls, on the Mohawk river. The situation is greatly picturesque—a large river tumbles and dashes amidst wooded fragments and tall precipices—the Dunkeld of America.

“Above the village, on the brow of a hill, stands a pretty octagon church, built by old Mr Ellice before the Independence, and I was told on the spot that it was known to his lady;—in consequence, it struck me that a view of the place would be an acceptable present, and on my way to Canada, I examined the environs to choose the most striking point to obtain it. On my return home, I described it to a young lady who possessed superior power with her pencil; but I forgot to tell her in what direction the water ran, and in consequence, she made it flow the wrong way. She saw, however, by the scenery that there was something incongruous in the picture, and made another drawing, changing the current, and so verifying the likeness; a copy was then produced, and though no sketch had been taken on the spot, and months had elapsed since it was seen, my servant, who was at Little Falls with me, knew the landscape at once. I gave the late Lady Hannah Ellice the drawings.

“Among painters the faculty may be common; but I have no talent that way, though possessed of some inclination to make architectural designs. Nor am I at all times sure, that my description is

sufficiently distinct to enable another to paint from it: after all, however, I suspect that some observance of the contour of things and of their character is really the whole extent occasionally experienced; to myself it is a very useless endowment, for I have never been in any situation where it was required. Besides, it cannot always be voluntarily commanded; it is like the poet's fyttē or the singer's voice, liable to be, if the expression may be used, sometimes brighter and sometimes dimmer, as the sensorium happens to be interested, nor is it always the most striking objects that make the strongest impression; a ludicrous instance of this may be also noted. I saw the present Queen of France a few days before she was married; she was then very simply dressed, going to a court gala; her gown was of light blue satin, short sleeved, and her meagre arms were without gloves.

"But the most curious example is in a picture of my lamented and kind friend the late Earl of Blessington, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. It was in the Somerset House exhibition, when first painted.

"In going through the rooms without noticing whose it was, I looked at it strangely struck, and said to a gentleman who was with me, 'if that picture is like, and I should ever become acquainted with the original, we shall be great friends.' On looking at the catalogue, we saw it was Lord Mountjoy. Years after, in 1821, I became acquainted with his lordship, he was then Earl of Blessington, and I had forgot all about the portrait of Lord Mountjoy. We did, however, become friends, but it was not till long after, when his appearance was greatly changed, that I knew he had ever been Lord Mountjoy, not indeed till one day when, sauntering through the drawing-rooms in his mansion, St James's Square, I discovered among the pictures the identical portrait by Lawrence, hanging in one of the front apartments, on the left side of the entrance to the salon, next to the fireplace. It was removed when the house was let to the Wyndham Club, but there was a stain on the crimson paper which marked where the frame had been.

"It is something like this which enables persons to identify, after a long interval, stolen goods; but in the peculiarity of recalling objects of sight, and describing them as if they were present, consists the faculty of local memory. Like freckles of the skin, tints of complexion, and hues of the hair, it is nothing to boast of,

though it helps to make individuality and to mark identity. The late unfortunate Stanislaus, the last King of Poland, had the endowment to a very extraordinary degree. He once so described the Empress Catherine II. to a painter, that one of the best likenesses ever painted of her imperial majesty was produced."

The following paragraphs regarding "The Omen," are also worthy of extract, as relating to its subject-matter, and the particular era of its composition :—

"After my return to London from Canada, being engaged as a commissioner in a controversy with the clergy corporation of the province relative to the value of their reserves, which were also, as well as those of the crown, to be sold to the Canada Company, I had some leisure, and as I never could be idle, I betook myself again to study, and produced several things: among others, a little tale called 'The Omen,' which, by the way, has never been ascribed to me. It is founded on the story to which I alluded to Lord Byron on speaking one day of the 'Bride of Abydos.' One circumstance connected with it was to me greatly gratifying. It was reviewed by Sir Walter Scott in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and with, in my opinion, a commendable degree of approbation, and facts stated corroborative of incidents that were pure metaphysical inventions.

"Although the conception of 'The Omen' may prevent it from becoming popular, it has, I think myself, some merit in the execution, and is not without the expression of natural feeling in several passages.' —*Literary Life*, vol. i. p. 270.

THE END.



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